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Winning the War on Children
Interview With Landon Starbuck

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Duke Pesta

The Importance of Vice Presidents
Steve Byas

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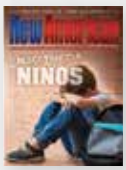

La batalla se está intensificando entre los que respaldan la educación tradicional, y los que buscan destruirla en el nombre de la ideología "woke." (2019, 48pp, 1-9/$3.95; 10-24/$1.50; 25-99/$1.25; 100+/$0.90) **ROCSS**

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– *Mark Twain*

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New American

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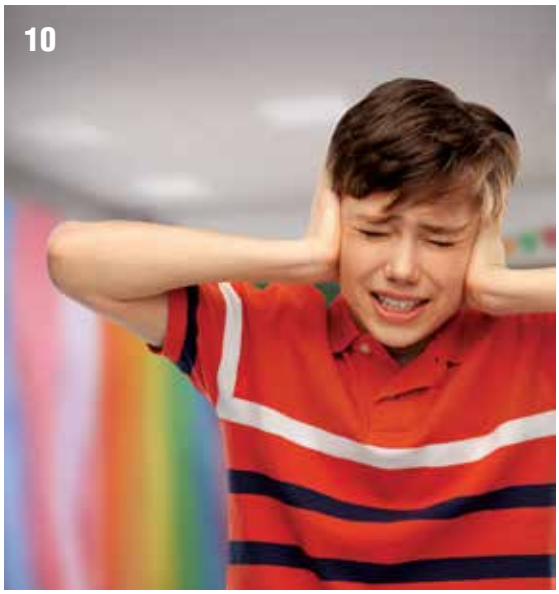

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The War on Children

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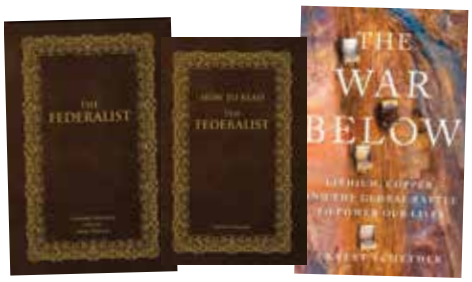

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— Thomas Jefferson

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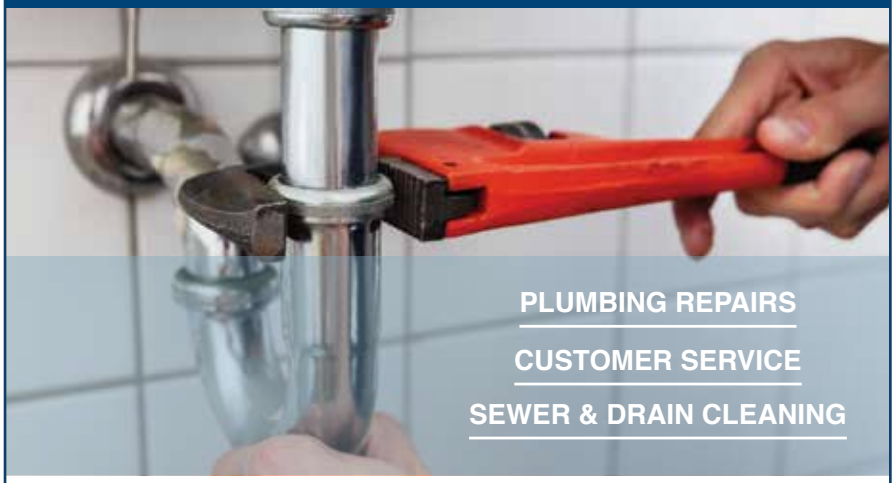

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New American

Printed in the U.S.A. • ISSN 0885-6540
P.O. Box 8040 • Appleton, WI 54912
920-749-3784 • 1-855-392-2666 (fax)
www.thenewamerican.com
editorial@thenewamerican.com

Rates are $59 per year (Canada, add $9; foreign, add $27) Copyright ©2024 by American Opinion Publishing, Inc. Periodicals postage paid at Appleton, WI and additional mailing offices. Postmaster: Send any address changes to *The New American*, P.O. Box 8040, Appleton, WI 54912.

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The New American is published twice monthly by American Opinion Publishing Inc., a wholly owned subsidiary of The John Birch Society.

A Well-known Fable and Today's Surreal World

The Emperor's New Clothes by Hans Christian Andersen has been a popular children's folktale for generations. Recalling this amusing tale may shed light on the serious subject of our cover story.

In the fable, a vain emperor who spends lavishly on new clothes is deceived by two swindlers posing as weavers. The swindlers claim that they can weave clothes so magnificent that anyone who is a fool or unfit for the emperor's office would be unable to see them. The weavers go through the motions of working diligently at their empty looms, and when finished present the nonexistent new "garments" to the emperor and have him undress and put them on. Of course, no one can see the splendid new clothes, but no one — including the emperor — will admit he cannot see them, since that would mean acknowledging that he is stupid or unworthy of the position.

So enthralled is the emperor with his fine new clothes that he sets off on a procession through the town so all his subjects can admire them. Everyone expresses how fine his clothes are — until a little child exclaims, "But he hasn't got anything on!" Everyone then wakes up to the fact that their eyes are not deceiving them, and the emperor really is naked.

Ah, but *The Emperor's New Clothes* is a folktale for children. How about reality? Could people be deceived or silenced to that extent?

In the not-too-distant past, well within the memories of most of us, just about everyone understood that there were only two sexes: male and female. Science informed us that our chromosomes determine our sex: Males possess one X and one Y chromosome, while females possess two X chromosomes. One did not have to be a biologist to determine someone's sex or (to employ a term that is now commonly used) gender. In fact, a five-year-old could tell the difference between a boy and a girl.

Today we are more enlightened — or so the establishment opinion cartel tells us. Only two sexes? Why, only an ignoramus would make such a preposterous claim! Moreover, we cannot tell a person's gender from his/her/their outward appearance. Nor can a physician who examines that person — or even a cytogeneticist who observes that person's chromosomes in the nuclei of cell samples under a microscope. After all, gender is not determined by genitalia or chromosomes, but by feeling. That is, a person's gender is whatever gender that person identifies as.

But how about when a person's body does not match his/her/their gender identity? Well, that person can undergo hormone therapy or have body parts lopped off or reconstructed to bring his/her/their body into conformity with his/her/their gender identity. That includes children, who might not be old enough to get a driver's license, but are old enough to opt for irreversible "gender-reassignment" surgery. And woe to anyone who ignorantly calls "gender-reassignment" surgery for children, let alone transgender education in the classroom, child abuse!

What a tale the opinion cartel has spun for us! That tale has become so pervasive that many children — who are the principal targets of the trans propaganda, and who are more apt than adults to accept as true whatever they are told — have come to believe that they are trapped in the body of the opposite sex, with devastating consequences, including depression, mutilation, and suicide.

We encourage you to read "Defending Children Against the Trans Agenda" (page 10), by senior editor Rebecca Terrell, about this war on children. The alarm sounded by this article is complemented by Terrell's interview of Landon Starbuck (page 17), who stars alongside her husband Robby in their documentary *The War on Children*. In the interview, Landon discusses solutions, as does Freedom-Project Academy's Dr. Duke Pesta in his article about the importance of classical education (page 23).

After reading this cover-story package, we encourage everyone to speak out without fear of being dismissed as fools or accused of hatred. By raising our voices, as did the little child in the fable, many others will muster the courage to also speak out.

— *Gary Benoit*

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1. Get our children out of public schools
2. Encourage faith leaders to form a cohesive crusade against public education
3. Defund all state and local public-school programs and abolishing the federal Department of Education

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Biden Urged to Buy Black Vote With Reparations Commission

U.S. Representative Sheila Jackson Lee (D-Texas) and advocates of slavery reparations are openly urging President Joe Biden to establish a commission to dangle the prospect of free cash in front of black voters to help defeat Donald Trump.

Lee and her gang "say Biden should bypass Congress and use his executive powers to create a slavery payouts panel to put him over the line against rival Donald Trump," the *Daily Mail* reported on April 26. "The sums are eye-watering — black lawmakers in Washington seek at least $14 trillion for a federal scheme to 'eliminate the racial wealth gap' between black and white Americans."

A pro-reparations group, Earn the Black Vote Collaborative, and Lee say that "voter apathy among Black communities poses a significant challenge, with an estimated 271,000 registered Black voters abstaining from the polls." However, creating a reparations commission is a "unique opportunity to not only address historical injustices but also to mobilize Black voters in key battleground states," group spokesman Kamm Howard said. "President Biden stands to benefit significantly from prioritizing reparative justice, as evidenced by the overwhelming support among infrequent Black voters surveyed."

Sheila Jackson Lee

AP Images

The group claims that a poll of uncertain black voters in Michigan showed that some 58 percent might vote for Biden if he created a commission, resulting in 150,000 votes for Biden. They note that Biden beat Trump in Michigan in 2020 by a slim 154,000 votes.

And, according to Earn the Black Vote Collaborative, "Similar trends were observed in Pennsylvania and Wisconsin…. In Pennsylvania, where Biden's margin of victory was 80,000 votes, the [poll] report estimated that a Reparations Commission could garner an additional 55,000 Black votes in 2024. Likewise, in Wisconsin, where Biden won by 20,000 votes, the commission could add 100,000 additional Black votes."

How much the radical idea might help Biden is unclear. The black-voters collective assumes only a *positive* effect from Biden's creating such a commission — but doing so might also energize apathetic white, Asian, and Hispanic voters who see the scheme as manifestly unfair and openly racialist politicking.

Germany Allows Parents to Change Sex of Newborns on Birth Certificates

The German parliament passed a law on April 12 that permits parents to change the sex of newly born children on their birth certificates. It also allows anyone found to have "deadnamed" someone — i.e., revealed that person's given name and birth sex without permission — to be hit with a $10,000 fine. The bill's purpose is to protect the false concept of "gender identity … by giving people the opportunity to change their [birth certificate] gender entry and first name without discrimination."

According to pro-woman, pro-child news website Reduxx on April 22, not only does the bill permit "parents to alter the recorded sex of children beginning from birth," but "from the age of five years old, it allows for name and sex changes if there is 'mutual consent' between the child and their parents." Plus, by age 14, kids can change their name and identity on their own. If parents refuse to go along with the madness, "'a family court would decide based on the best interests of the child,' thus allowing the state to overrule the wishes of parents or legal guardians."

It appears the United States is heading in Germany's direction. Last year, leftist U.S. Representative Pramilla Jayapal (D-Wash.), an Indian immigrant, introduced H. Res. 269, a "Transgender Bill of Rights."

Aside from forcing women to involuntarily share public restrooms with men, the bill would also force girls to play school sports with boys and force girls to use school restrooms with boys, force doctors and hospitals to provide "gender-affirming care" for "transgender" youngsters, and block states from forbidding such care.

Whether the law would ban sex identification on birth certificates or permit parents to designate whatever sex they want for their child isn't clear, but states that refuse to identify a child as the sex he or she "prefers" or refuse to permit parents to designate the sex of the child on a birth certificate would likely face a federal civil-rights lawsuit.

Liudmila Chernetska/iStock/Getty Images Plus

Biden Admin Puts Millions of Acres of Alaska Off-limits for Oil and Gas

On April 19, Daily Wire reported that the Department of the Interior's Bureau of Land Management had placed millions of acres in Alaska off-limits to further extraction of oil and gas.

"Following significant engagement with the public, Alaska Native Tribes, and Alaska Native Corporations, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) finalized the Management and Protection of the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska (NPR-A) rule that will ensure maximum protection for significant resource values on the more than 13 million acres of Special Areas in the western Arctic, while supporting subsistence uses and needs for Alaska Native communities," the BLM announced. The NPR-A is estimated to contain 8.7 billion barrels of undiscovered oil, as well as a vast quantity of natural gas.

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Last year the administration put 2.8 million acres in Alaska and the Arctic Ocean off-limits, so in just one year's time it has placed nearly 16 million acres of potential oil- and gas-producing land out of reach.

In spite of the administration's claim that its actions will support "subsistence uses and needs for Alaska Native communities," Josiah Patkotak, mayor of the North Slope Borough, where the reserve is located, decried the decision.

"The [Department of the Interior] seems to believe that they care about this land more than we do," Patkotak said. "The elected leaders of the North Slope spoke in unison in opposition to this rule and the rulemaking process. To refuse to listen to our voices is to say that you know better — better than the people who have been this land's stewards for the past 10,000 years, and who depend on its continued health for their own survival."

In March, the Alaska Legislature passed a resolution asking the administration to withdraw its proposal to put the NPR-A off-limits. Republican Alaska state Representative Thomas Baker argued in support of the resolution, saying that the new rule "would turn millions of acres into de facto wilderness, which would preclude any development, any subsistence activities."

Home Depot Brings in K-9 Security Due to Migrants

Biden "migrants" who gathered outside the Home Depot in New Rochelle, New York, to harass and steal from customers were such a nuisance that the company hired a K-9 security guard.

The *New York Post* reported on April 21 that the illegal aliens were frightening — if not actually accosting — customers as they left the store, pressuring the shoppers for tips to help unload their carts.

Although the canine presence seems to have driven the illegals off that property, at another store that the *Post* visited, in the Bronx's Throggs Neck neighborhood, some 30 illegals "hovered" at the Home Depot's doors — as documented by the paper with numerous photographs.

"Some were day laborers simply trying to 'shape' for work with local contractors," the *Post* reported. But others were either flashers, thieves, or trying to shake down shoppers for tips. "Many others aggressively confronted shoppers, trying to sell them phony Apple Airpods or soliciting tips for lifting items from shopping carts into cars — even when uninvited…. A female supervisor saw one of the men washing his privates with a water bottle in the lot, and … several women have called customer service to complain that migrants robbed them of purses or phones."

The migrants are nothing if not aggressive, and won't take no for an answer when they ask to carry or load merchandise, one woman said. She related that her husband twice told a panhandling illegal to back off, but he wouldn't quit. "When her husband turned around to open the car door, the man 'put his hand' on one of the boxes in their cart," the *Post* reported. The husband told the man to not touch anything, and when the migrant didn't stop, the wife threatened him with pepper spray. "He started looking like he was getting angry. So we just hurried up and jumped in the car," she said.

Home Depot's headquarters ignored that customer's complaint, but the problem is bad enough in the Bronx that two more stores there will get K-9 security. ■

AP Images

QUICK QUOTES

— Compiled by Rebecca Terrell

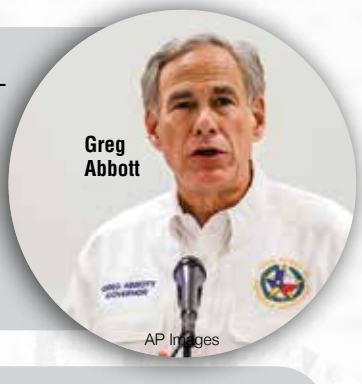
Eva Vlaardingerbroek
twitter.com/EvaVlaar

"Let me walk you through the past seven days in Europe. This week in Stockholm, three elderly women in their 70s were stabbed in broad daylight on the streets. In London, four people were stabbed in a time span of just 42 hours. In Paris, hundreds of African migrants took to the street to riot, and in Brigolo, also in France, yet another church was burned down to the ground."

Dutch conservative commentator **Eva Vlaardingerbroek** *appeared at CPAC Hungary to expose the "link between mass migration and crime."*

"Title IX was written by Congress to support the advancement of women academically and athletically. The law was based on the fundamental premise that there are only two sexes — male and female. You have rewritten Title IX to force schools to treat boys as if they were girls and to accept every student's self-declared gender identity. This ham-handed effort to impose a leftist belief onto Title IX exceeds your authority as President."

Texas Republican Governor **Greg Abbott** *wrote to President Biden in April with news of his instructions to his state education agency to ignore Biden's revised Title IX rules.*


Greg Abbott
AP Images

"Shortly after that, I went over to be election integrity counsel for Donald Trump. Since that transition has happened, I've had the U.S. Marshals show up at my house, the FBI, the Department of Justice has interrogated me, and I've been investigated by bars. I've had several independent investigations, as well as been subpoenaed in — I want to say — four civil cases."

Appearing on Steve Bannon's War Room *podcast, former Trump attorney and current RNC senior counsel for election integrity* **Christina Bobb** *discussed April's Arizona grand jury indictment that claims she tried to overturn the 2020 election. If convicted of the nine felonies listed, she said, "I assume it would be the rest of my life in prison."*

Victoria Spartz
AP Images

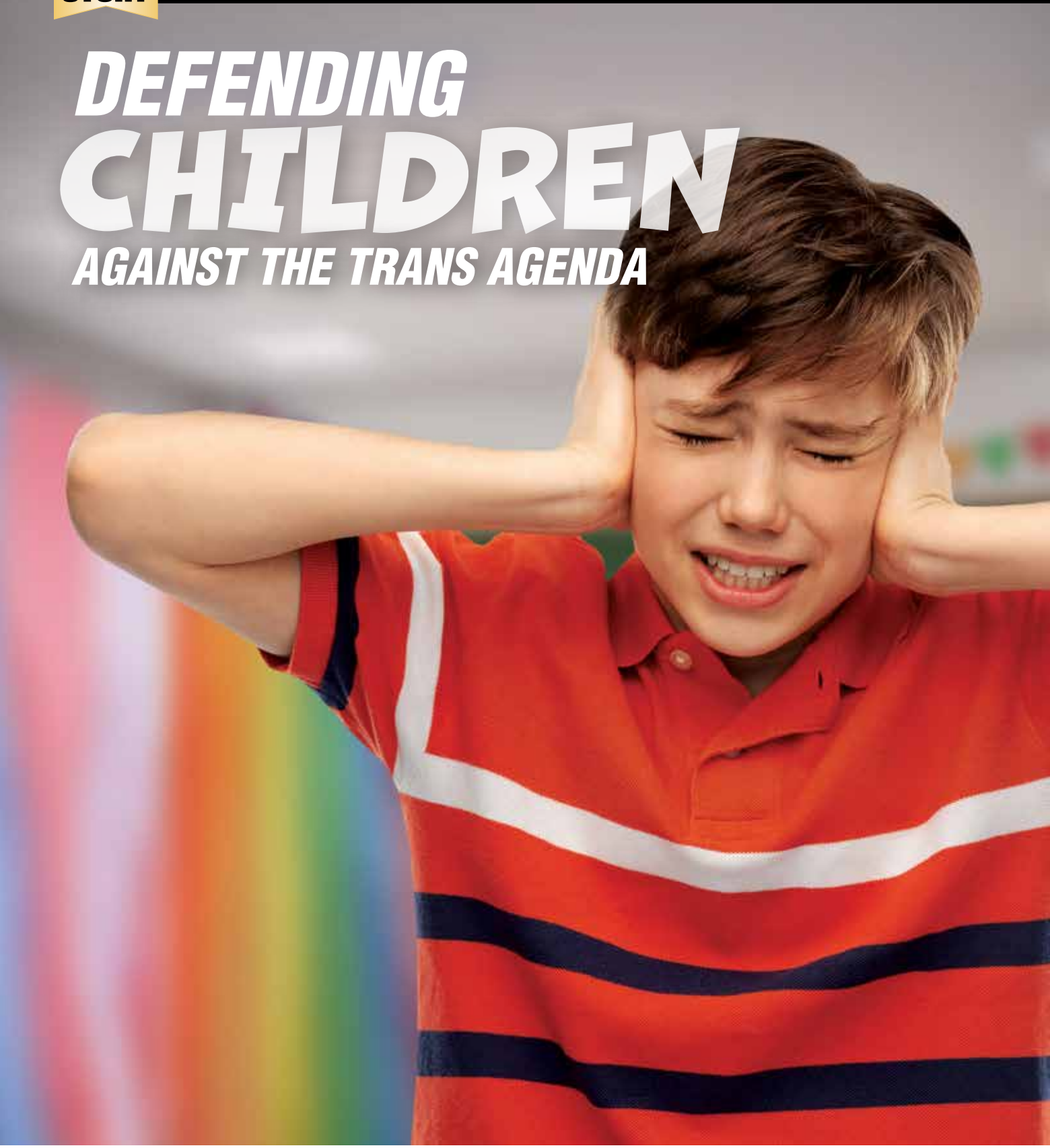
"They can deal with their own corruption…. I am an American congresswoman, and I want to make sure that they are not taking our money and weapons. You don't know if they're going to go to Ukraine. I know from one of the packages before — a billion dollars went to Yemen — so Ukraine is becoming a slush fund."

Ukrainian-born Representative **Victoria Spartz** (R-Ind.) *spoke with* PBD Podcast *host Patrick Bet-David about President Biden's latest $61 billion gift to her native country.*

"I say those who are mobilizing and lying to the community and really preying on the abilities of people, dividing communities, are the ones who are domestic terrorists."

Lilian Seenoi-Barr, *a native of Kenya, was recently selected by the Social Democratic and Labor Party in Northern Ireland to be mayor of the city of Derry. Some party members say her selection was undemocratic, and one city councilor resigned over it. Meanwhile, she appeared on Highland Radio to defend her statements about native Irish who protest mass migration.*

DEFENDING CHILDREN AGAINST THE TRANS AGENDA



Protecting our future means defending children from the modern onslaught of perversion. We are already giving up liberty in the name of tolerance. Will we now sacrifice our kids?

by Rebecca Terrell

Editor's Note: Because of the subject matter, this article is not appropriate for children. Reader discretion is advised.

They're coming for your children — for their hearts, minds, bodies, and souls. Radicals openly admit their diabolical aims.

"You think that we'll corrupt your kids if our agenda goes unchecked. Funny, just this once, *you're correct*. We'll convert your children. Happens bit by bit, quietly and subtly, and you will barely notice it."

A member of the San Francisco Gay Men's Chorus mockingly performed those lines in 2021. They are some of the opening lyrics of a song called "Message From the Gay Community." You can view their music video on YouTube; the blatant admission doesn't violate that platform's "Hate Speech" or "Child Safety" guidelines as does mentioning election fraud or criticizing the Covid jab.

And that was by no means a one-off.

"We're here! We're queer! We're coming for your children!"

These chants pierced the air at a drag queen march in New York last June. The debauched rabble repeatedly shouted the threat, flashing devious smiles and gyrating to the beat of their own discordance. The degenerates included transvestites, a topless woman long past her prime, and hundreds of reprobate souls who seemed to be vying for who could appear most grotesque. When NBC News interviewed event organizer Brian Griffin about the resulting public outcry, he brushed it off. "It's all just words," he said. "It's all presented to fulfill their worst stereotypes of us."

"Just words" — like "diversity, equity, and inclusion" (DEI), the catch phrase used to exonerate those who are taking this war on children mainstream.

AP Images

Predator activism: Protesters in Canada picketed on February 3 in opposition to proposed legislation that would restrict mutilating gender surgeries for minors.

Children's Entertainment

The entertainment world has been emerging from the closet for years, starting with a smattering of homosexual characters sprinkled here and there in children's programming. In 2016, Nickelodeon outed a family with two dads in *The Loud House*. The Cartoon Network's *Adventure Time*, which aired in the 20-teens, featured two female characters who were romantically involved, and the same channel gained critical acclaim for several LGBTQ personalities in its series *Steven Universe*. The target audience of each of these animated series was children under 12.

In 2019, one of the main characters on the Disney Channel live-action series *Andi Mack* came out as "gay," and that same year, the long-running PBS animated series *Arthur*, aimed at four- to eight-year-olds, revealed that the show's elementary-school teacher, Mr. Ratburn, was getting married to another male character.

However, this trickling of sodomitical propaganda has turned into a torrent of perversion in the post-Covid children's entertainment industry.

Hulu now offers teens the television series *Love, Simon*, based on the award-winning young-adult novel *Simon vs. the Homo Sapiens Agenda*. The story of a closeted high-school student, it premiered at the height of the lockdowns in 2020. Its spinoff, *Love, Victor*, streams on Disney+ and is packed with characters who are openly homosexual, including the protagonist.

Disney apparently can't make a production these days without including young, sexually deviant role models. In 2022, Disney Animation released the movie *Strange World*, with a teenage LGBTQ lead character: a 16-year-old named Ethan who has a crush on a boy at school.

At the same time, Disney's Pixar division premiered the movie *Lightyear*, with a significant lesbian character cast as the namesake's commander and "married" to a female. Last year, Pixar produced *Elemental*, another animated movie, featuring lesbian "partners" who met in art school. One of them uses they/them pronouns.

Preschoolers are flooded with filth, too. Streaming on Netflix is the animated series *Ridley Jones*, with "nonbinary" Fred as a lead character. He is a young, coif-conscious bison who goes by they/them pronouns and whines to his grandmother when she uses the wrong ones. She apologizes and says, "Thank you for showing me your heart."

A huge heart covered the bosom of a cartoon transvestite who led two- to six-year-olds in a Pride Parade sing-along in June 2021 on Nickelodeon's *Blue's Clues & You!*

The same year, Disney's popular *Muppet Babies* television program turned Baby Gonzo into "Gonzorella." Wearing a glittery, blue-sequined gown, he exclaims, "I wanna be me!" Instead of apologizing when parents protested, company execu-

Rebecca Terrell is a senior editor of The New American.

tives wagged their self-righteous heads and spewed the standard "acceptance" and "self-expression" rhetoric.

Corporate Support

But it's not about acceptance. This is not-so-quiet, not-so-subtle *advertising*, and the target audience is children.

Why else does Scholastic Corporation promote cross-dresser picture books such as *Julián Is a Mermaid* for four- to eight-year-olds, and what else could be the reason Macmillan Publishers distributes *The Prince and the Dressmaker*, a graphic novel for pre-teens?

Why did Target Corporation celebrate "Pride Month" last June by marketing "trans" baby clothes and children's swimsuits with "tuck-friendly construction"?

In fact, child targeting seems to be epidemic in the corporate and nonprofit worlds. Dell, Gap, Amazon, Experian, Nike, HP, Allstate, Lilly, and Pfizer are among many major financial backers of The GenderCool Project, a nonprofit founded to promote the idea to young people that unnatural vice is chic.

PBS, HBO, Google, Hulu, Yahoo, Facebook, Microsoft, Intuit, and Spotify are just some of the companies that work with the grooming organization Drag Queen Story Hour, which hosts events for children aged three to 11 in public libraries.

The It Gets Better Project boasts funding partners such as American Eagle, TikTok, Converse, UGG, Taco Bell, elf, ChapStick, Redken, and Bath & Body Works, which support its outreach programs. These include an initiative that teaches kids how to get involved in drag performance, and "Queer Sex Ed," a video series of teens talking about "queer sex, sex in the media, consent and pleasure," according to the group's website.

The annual "Spirit Day" brought to you by the advocacy group GLAAD (Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation) promotes sodomy among youth. Corporate partners include Coca-Cola, Starbucks, Uber, Nike, American Airlines, Apple, Bank of America, Johnson & Johnson, AT&T, and Procter & Gamble.

GLSEN (the Gay, Lesbian & Straight Education Network) urges schools to hide K-12 students' "gender transitions" from parents, and they get big bucks from the likes of Hollister, Comcast, Wells Fargo, BMW, Kia, T-Mobile, New Balance, Ulta Beauty, and the NBA to do so.

YouTube

Social engineering, Muppet style: In 2021, Disney turned Baby Gonzo into nonbinary "Gonzorella," who declares, "I don't want to do things just because that's the way they've always been done."

Why are all these major corporations jumping on the DEI bandwagon? "It was a tri-part takeover," says Justin Danhof, corporate governance head at Strive Asset Management, during an interview in the new documentary by Robby and Landon Starbuck, *The War on Children*.

The three-pronged attack Danhof describes came about because: 1. boards of directors are manned with leftists; 2. conservatives keep their mouths shut, knowing their views are blacklisted; and 3. radical shareholders such as BlackRock, State Street, and Vanguard demand that companies practice ESG (environmental, social, governance) management.

The problem is so pervasive that investment banks such as Goldman Sachs no longer finance companies' initial public offerings unless their boards are "diverse," and NASDAQ will delist corporations if their directors are all-male and all-white. According to Danhof, companies are "tarred and feathered and shamed" for not maintaining high scores on the Human Rights Campaign's "Corporate Equality Index," which HRC calls "the national benchmarking tool on corporate policies, practices and benefits pertinent to [LGBTQ] employees."

Businesses boost their indices by virtue-signaling their support for the homosexual agenda. That explains all the corporate-sponsored "pride" events and rainbow-flag waving.

Official Depravity

In some states, you can get into big legal trouble and even destroy your career for trying to rescue children from these well-funded, depraved molesters. Last July, Michigan's Democratic Governor Gretchen Whitmer signed into law a bill banning "conversion therapy" for so-called LGBTQ minors. (Note the underhanded use of the term "conversion," which implies some nefarious religious motive, rather than a more apt term such as "reparative.")

Whitmer's bill means health professionals could be disciplined and even lose their licenses for defending youth against left-wing gender ploys and for daring to point out biological facts.

Also last year, the state of New Jersey

sued three school districts for requiring parental notification should students alter pronouns or express a wish to change gender. It is one of more than a dozen states that now allow a nonbinary or third-gender option on birth certificates and have removed a "proof of surgery" requirement (not that removing body parts changes a person's sex).

Even reputedly red Florida provides no safe haven of virtue. Two years ago, the state passed its Parental Rights in Education bill (aka its "Don't Say Gay" law, which bars perverse discussion in kindergarten, elementary, and middle-school classrooms), but a coalition of LGBTQ civil rights groups and individuals sued for discrimination. Republican Governor Ron DeSantis' administration agreed to a settlement in March. Now students and teachers are free to speak about deviant sex provided the topic is not part of the formal lesson plan. They can adorn classrooms with pride flags and rainbow stickers, discuss sexual perversity ad nauseam, and host campus groups and events — provided the class instructor does not officially document the lewdness.

Additionally, though many conservative states have passed laws prohibiting child endangerment and mutilation (deceptively called "gender-affirming therapy"), both California and Colorado have enacted legislation to shield parents and healthcare providers, respectively, from prosecution for providing medication and surgery to minors who travel there to pursue such reckless plans.

The official depravity extends even to the White House. President Joe Biden wasn't joking when he told Comedy Central's *The Daily Show* in March 2023 that he wants to see federal legislation that forces doctors to imperil and dismember their patients. "The way we do it is, we make sure we pass legislation like we passed on same-sex marriage. You mess with that, you're breaking the law, and you're going to be held accountable."

YouTube

Horror story: Every day, Americans patronize the large corporations that fund demonic perversion of their children through programs such as Drag Queen Story Hour.

Mad Scientists

What exactly are these medical treatments Biden advocates for children?

They involve more than noninvasive (albeit perverted) voice training and mental health "counseling" (otherwise known as "grooming"). Hormone therapy, puberty blockers, and "sex reassignment" surgeries make up the life-altering and often irreversible "therapies," though the hypocrisy of people who advocate for these interventions is outrageous. What about their oft-touted claims that gender cannot be determined by physical characteristics?

Meanwhile, here's how their treatments are affecting the next generation:

Testosterone injections, gels, patches, or implants are used off-label to masculinize girls. Depo-Testosterone is a popular Pfizer brand. This and other synthetic testosterone products come with a black-box warning specifically for children. (A black-box warning is the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's strongest measure short of pulling a drug from the market due to a high risk of adverse effects. It means that a drug should not be administered without necessity.) The hormone — particularly unsafe for children — can stunt growth, cause physical deformities, increase the risk of cardiovascular problems, and render a patient infertile.

Feminizing boys comes with its own set of consequences. Estrogen products such as those promoted by both Pfizer and Lilly (is it now clear why they both support The GenderCool Project?) are used off-label despite their black-box warnings for increased risks of cancer, dementia, and cardiovascular disorders.

Often coupled with these medications are puberty blockers, which suppress the release of sex hormones from glands. In other words, they create a problem where none existed. So much for the Hippocratic Oath. A common puberty blocker is spironolactone, and — you guessed it — there's a black-box warning on it, too, because of the associated high risk of cancer in animal trials. Another group of puberty blockers are gonadotropin-releasing hormone agonists, which the FDA recently identified as causing dangerous brain swelling in five- to 12-year olds.

Along with medications, surgical interventions include mastectomies for girls who think they're boys, or breast implants and facial plastic surgery for boys who think they're girls (even though physical characteristics aren't supposed to define anyone). These are known as "top surgeries," and they permanently disfigure and/or scar patients.

"Bottom surgeries" — or "genital reconstructions" — are even more gruesome, disfiguring, and dangerous. Vaginoplasty is the creation of an empty cavity (doctors have the nerve to call it a "neovagina") in boys, often using skin grafts from the penis or scrotum. Male genital reconstruction can also involve orchiectomy (removal of the testes) and penectomy (removal of the penis).

Girls are mutilated through procedures called phalloplasty (construction

of a "neopenis" and urethral lengthening through tissue grafts) or metoidioplasty (clitoris enlargement). These are difficult if not impossible to reverse once the patient matures.

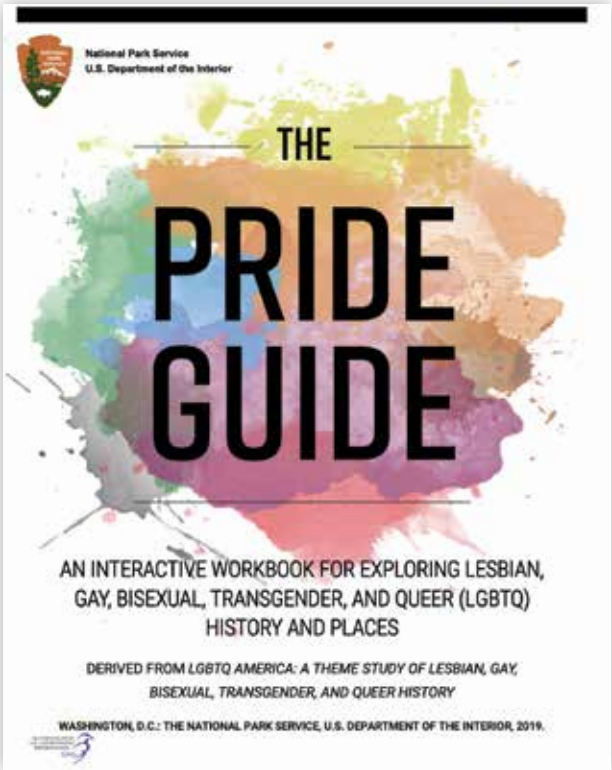
The results of these dangerous and disfiguring surgeries can be fatal. In fact, the "Dutch protocol," which is one of the primary models adopted by pediatric gender clinics worldwide, is based on a multi-decadal study in The Netherlands that involved dozens of young people, one of whom died. He had been given puberty blockers for years and so did not have enough penile tissue for surgeons to invert that organ in vaginoplasty. So they recklessly substituted a section of his bowel. Infection brought on septic shock and caused multiple organs to fail, extinguishing the life of this 18-year-old. Researchers detailed his case in the February 2017 *Journal of Pediatric and Adolescent Gynecology*, yet came to the astonishingly flippant conclusion: "Although vaginal reconstruction has a positive influence on the quality of life in transgender women, physicians and patients need to be aware of serious complications that might arise."

That teen had been part of the "Amsterdam Cohort of Gender Dysphoria Study," discussed in the April 2018 *Journal of Sexual Medicine*, a meta-analysis of patient medical files from 1972 through 2015. Over that same period, the American Psychiatric Association (APA) implemented a diabolical metamorphosis in diagnostic codes used worldwide and cataloged in its *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (DSM). From the first edition published in 1952 through the mid-1980s, homosexuality, self-abuse, transvestitism, and similar vices were labeled "Sexual Deviations." The manual acknowledged that anatomic sex is apparent regardless of how the patient feels. It called transsexualism in children "rare," and explained that though it "seems always to develop in the context of a disturbed parent-child relationship," most kids grow out of it.

But then in 1987, weighty revisions crept in. "Sexual Deviations" somehow lost their deviancy. They became "Psychosexual Disorders," a classification that held steady until 2013, when the APA threw sanity entirely out the window. In DSM-5, "Disorder" became "Dysphoria" (i.e., "unhappiness"). The APA admitted the change was intended to "depathologize" gender nonconformity. Instead of dealing realistically with kids, doctors were suddenly supposed to reinforce and encourage sexual deviancy in those entrusted to their care. The Obama administration dutifully published its 67-page white paper *Ending Conversion Therapy: Supporting and Affirming LGBTQ Youth* in 2015, stating that, far from being a "mental disorder," transgenderism is "normal," and reparative therapy efforts are "coercive" and "harmful."

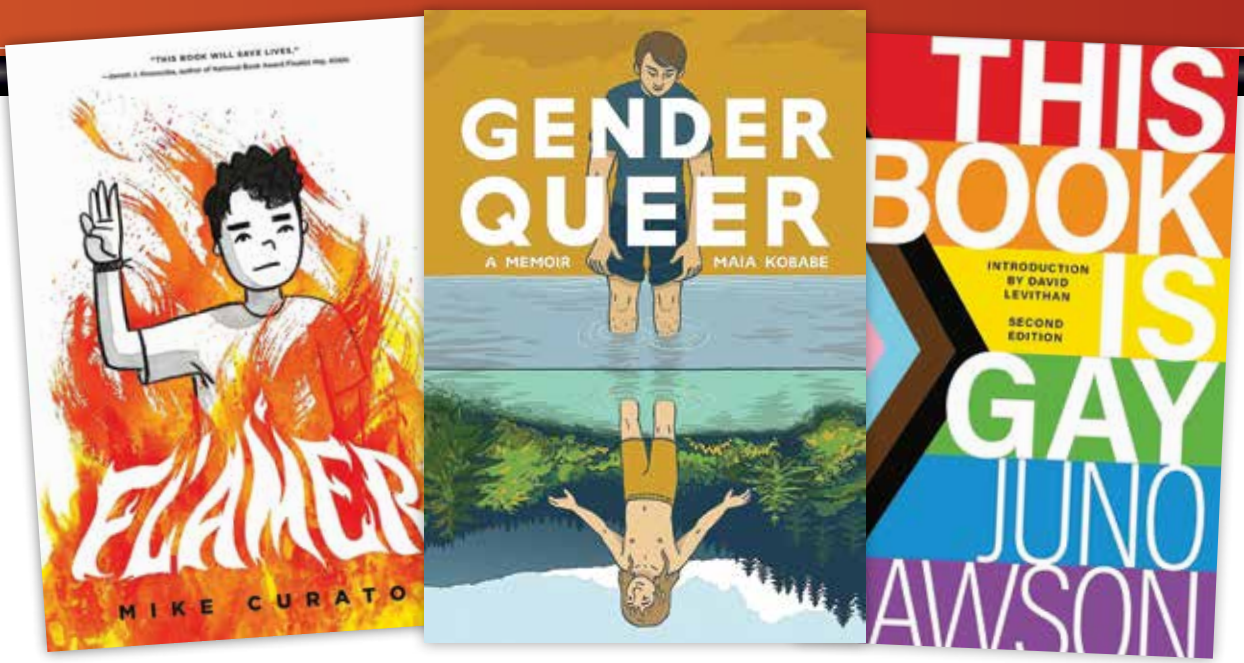
This shocking disregard for patient well-being has spawned a reprehensible but lucrative "gender transition" specialization within the medical world that seems to have exchanged Hippocrates for hypocrisy. The World Professional Association for Transgender Health (WPATH) is an international coalition of healthcare professionals renowned as the world's top authorities in that novel and dubious field. Last year, Project Veritas released leaked footage of WPATH doctors admitting the madness of their methods. "It's always a good theory that you talk about fertility preservation with a 14-year-old, but I know I'm talking to a blank wall," said Dr. Daniel Metzger, a pediatric endocrinologist with British Columbia Children's Hospital, admitting that it's impossible to obtain true informed consent from someone who hasn't even had high-school biology yet. "That's always bothered me, but you know, we still want the kids to be happy — happier in the moment, right?" He also noted many cases of ensuing "reproductive regret" among the young adults who were followed in the Dutch study.

Michael Shellenberger's nonprofit Environmental Progress (EP) published further leaked WPATH documentation this March, exposing "dangerously pseudoscientific surgical and hormonal experiments" on children — among them a 10-year-old girl and a 13-year-old developmentally delayed adolescent. EP says that the files reveal WPATH doctors have misled the public by concealing the harmful and permanent effects of mutilating surgeries, and have violated medical ethics by perpetuating erroneous gender "myths," including the falsehood that without sex-change modification, "trans" youth are more likely to commit suicide.



Pride parks? The National Park Service published this guide to LGBTQ "History and Places" in 2019. It is "intended for teenagers."

In fact, the entire field of "gender medicine for children and young people is built on shaky foundations," writes Dr. Hilary Cass in the April 9, 2024 *British Medical Journal*. She is a leading consultant pediatrician, commissioned by the National Health Service (NHS), England's socialized medical system, to study guidelines used worldwide, such as the Dutch protocol and WPATH's methods. Her project began in 2019, with results released this April. Cass' team composed a seemingly endless litany of problems, among them unclear rationales for early puberty suppression, weak evidence regarding physical and mental health



Pornography at school: Books such as these, which graphically depict sex acts between teens, are allowed in school libraries, but parents who try to expose them at school-board meetings are silenced.

impacts, entirely unknown effects on development, lack of long-term follow-up, and reckless disregard for informed consent. "In particular, we lack follow-up data on the more recent cohort of predominantly birth-registered females who frequently have a range of co-occurring conditions including adverse childhood experiences, autism and a range of mental health challenges," writes Cass.

She highlighted the shocking trend on BBC Radio 4's *Today* program in April. "Fifteen years ago, [NHS's gender-identity development service] was seeing predominantly birth-registered boys in childhood," and fewer than 50 children annually, she said. But "over the last 10 years or so it's switched to over 3,000 young people, and it's mainly birth-registered girls presenting in early teens … often with quite complex problems."

Journalist Abigail Shrier noted the same disturbing phenomenon in her 2020 book *Irreversible Damage: The Transgender Craze Seducing Our Daughters*. She cited evidence of a strong historical correlation between mothers with mental-health issues and their *sons* questioning gender identity. But a little more than a decade ago began a trend of formerly bright, happy *girls* who, after puberty, become anxious and depressed. Eating disorders and self-harm ensue, just before new names and pronouns make their entrance. Sex-change mutilations complete the destruction.

The numbers are indeed astronomical. More than 1.6 million people in the United States identify as transgender; nearly 20 percent of them are teenagers, according to the most recent data from the Williams Institute, the gender-identity arm of UCLA's School of Law. Yet in 2017, the organization reported 1.5 million transgender people in the United States, while less than 10 percent of those were teens.

Moreover, consider the narrow range of 10 to 15 years, cited by both Cass and Shrier, during which this remarkable trend was born. What happened between 2009 and 2014 that affected it? Note that much of the devolution already discussed in this article occurred within that time frame. However, researchers agree that one of the main culprits convincing kids to question gender is social media.

Screen Time

The timeline certainly fits in this regard as well. Social media launched in the mid-2000s, with Facebook (2004) and YouTube (2005) quickly taking the lead in a relatively small playing field. Twitter emerged the following year. Since then, the industry has exploded to include thousands of message-, photo-, and video-sharing platforms.

Over the same period, parents have increasingly abandoned their children to screens, utilizing the latter as teacher and babysitter, though they are actually grooming devices. Kids grow up on them. According to the American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry, children spend an average of five hours per day on electronic media, and teens top out at nine.

Screens inundate youth with images and messaging that normalize sick behavior and add social capital to imitating it. The consistent message is twofold, "Be who you want to be" and "accept others without question," but the role models are hellish. Platforms such as Instagram and TikTok have popularized trans personalities such as Nikita Dragun and Carmen Carrera, who rake in millions in social-media monetization by giving "lifestyle advice" (i.e., grooming).

Brown University researcher and physician Lisa Littman warned of the social-media menace in her 2018 study "Rapid-onset gender dysphoria in adolescents and young adults: A study of parental reports," published in the journal *PLOS ONE*. "Parents describe a process of immersion in social media … immediately preceding their child becoming gender dysphoric," she wrote. Calling it a "contagion," Littman says teens then typically turn on their families, labeling parents "'transphobic,' 'abusive,' or 'toxic'" for disagreeing with them.

Should we wonder? Children spend well more than half their waking hours in daily brainwashing sessions the likes of which even George Orwell could not have imagined, because along with daily screen bingeing, kids live the bulk of their days at ground zero of the war zone — in school.

Gigi Gorgeous: Gregory Allan Lazzarato began his "transition to female" in 2013, documenting the experience on social media and gaining fame as both activist and celebrity.

Wikimedia/Pax Ahimsa Gethen

School of Rot

Educational indoctrination is masked as social-emotional learning (SEL), doublespeak for the process by which predators who have taken over schools shift the focus from academic excellence to "emotional intelligence" and "relationship skills," both dumbing children down and grooming them for perversity. Twenty-nine states and the District of Columbia require sex education in K-12 public schools, according to the nonprofit Sexuality Information and Education Council of the United States. Even in places where it is not mandated, schools can and do teach it. Couched in disarming adjectives such as "age appropriate," "evidence based," and "medically accurate," popular curricula include lesson plans that contain language such as this:

> There are some body parts that mostly just girls have and some parts that mostly just boys have. Being a boy or a girl doesn't have to mean you have those parts, but for most people this is how their bodies are. Most people have a vulva and a vagina or a penis and testicles but some people's bodies can be different. Your body is exactly what is right for you.

This quote appears in an "age-appropriate" lesson plan for *kindergartners*, in a free-to-download curriculum called 3Rs (Rights, Respect, Responsibility), published by Advocates for Youth. It's a nonprofit funded not only by leftist foundations such as Ford, Hewlett, and George Soros' Open Societies, but also by *you*, courtesy of federal grants. A PowerPoint presentation containing anatomically correct drawings of nude children accompanies the lecture. By the end of class, *five-year-olds* are supposed to be able to correctly identify and name three male and three female body parts: "nipples, penis or vulva, and anus."

To complement the lesson plans, Advocates for Youth provides an equally inappropriate video series at Amaze.org. These short, pornographic clips include animation of sexual acts. "*Masturbation: Totally Normal*" is explicitly depicted for elementary and middle-schoolers. "*Porn: Fact or Fiction*" reassures kids that "being curious about sex and looking at pictures or films of naked bodies or people engaging in sexual behaviors is perfectly normal."

Such casual impropriety is designed to break down natural virtue and inhibitions and accustom children to smut. "They want to sexualize children. They groom the children" to think in sexual terms, explains Monica Cline, former Planned Parenthood health educator and founder of the non-profit It Takes A Family. Appearing in the 2022 documentary *The Mind Polluters*, she explains that one of the overriding principles in modern sex education is that children are "sexual from birth" and have a basic human *right* to engage in sex acts. The "oppressor" of this so-called right is the parent. "Those are not my words," she cautions. "Those are the words of Planned Parenthood."

That destructive organization promotes its own middle-school curriculum called Get Real. It features a series of cat-themed videos. "Episode 2: Sex and Masturbation" opens with the words "Taking Care of Your ___." The "blank" is filled with an image of a cat meowing. "Feline frisky?" it asks. "Sex and masturbation can be fun and healthy. Get the scoop on pawing around down there." Watching the video, students learn the so-called "benefits" of self-abuse and how to do it "with or without toys" or "lube." Other videos tell kids how to figure out whether they are "trans" and suggest ways of "coming out."

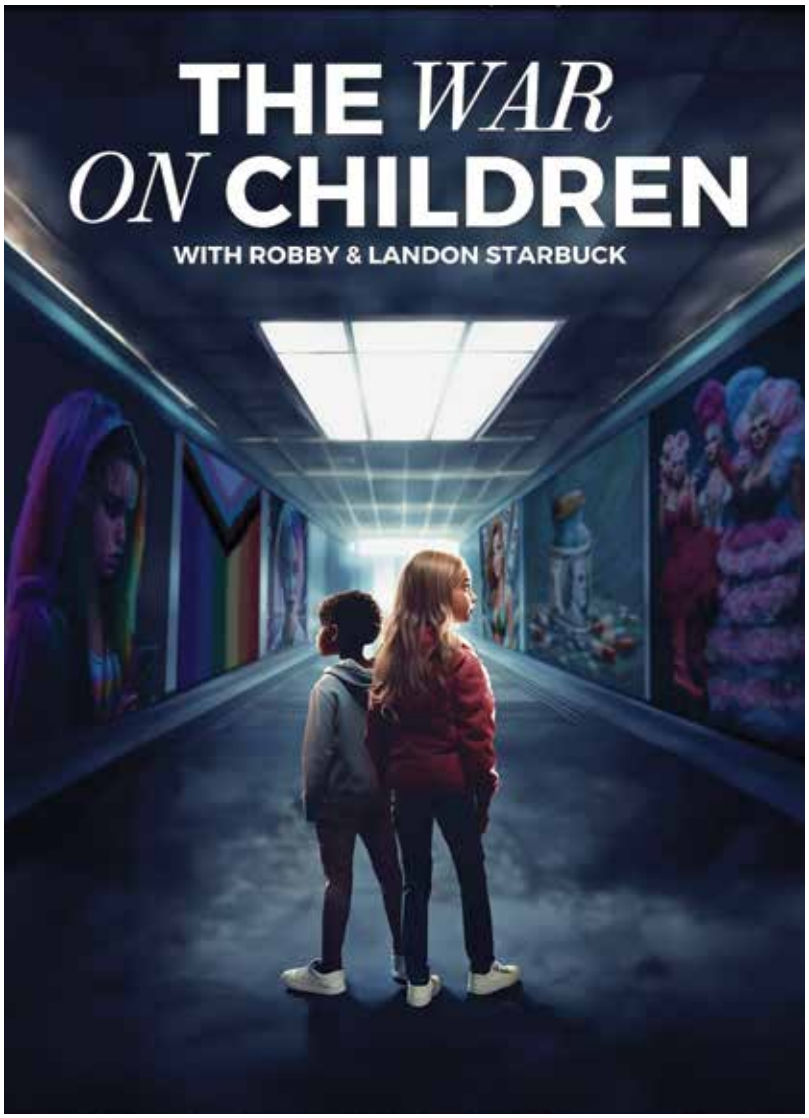
Taxpayers foot the bill for Get Real, 3Rs, and many other curricula on the comprehensive sex-ed market, through funding provided by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Despite paying for it, parents who expose these materials and pornographic library books at school-board meetings are routinely silenced and removed. The smut is too graphic for that forum, yet current law in a majority of states exempts educators from prosecution on obscenity charges over the explicit material they peddle. The excuse is that in the classroom, such material is educational.

Obviously, attempts by parents to rescue their children from this demonic onslaught are thwarted at every turn. From well-funded media campaigns to governmental pushback, from a trans-obliging medical establishment to corrupt schools, parents are overwhelmingly outnumbered on the battlefield.

What is the solution? That is one question *The New American* asked Landon Starbuck in an exclusive interview following the release of her documentary *The War on Children*. She founded the nonprofit Freedom Forever specifically to defend youth in this battle for their hearts, minds, bodies, and souls, so her perspective stands out strongly amid the cacophony of distractions to the clear path forward. Her answer is both brilliant in its practicality and challenging in its simplicity, and is included in the transcript that begins on the next page. Read on for a glimpse of her vision. Our future is in the balance. ■

LANDON STARBUCK
WINNING THE WAR ON CHILDREN

A new documentary exposes the gruesome reality of the trans agenda to pervert innocent children and what parents can do to protect the next generation.



The War on Children

Interview by Rebecca Terrell

The dynamic husband-and-wife Robby and Landon Starbuck star in their new documentary *The War on Children*, which exposes the transgender attack being waged on youth from every conceivable angle: education, entertainment, the news, politics, big tech, medicine, nonprofits, and the corporations that finance them. These are the "weapons" the Starbucks identify, and they provide solutions necessary to win this war.

Their film is absolutely horrifying and completely inappropriate for children to watch, so discretion is advised. This gut-wrenching exposé takes viewers across the country, interviewing parents, pastors, professional experts, celebrities, detransitioners, drag and porn personalities, former victims of sex trafficking, and a mother who lost her daughter to suicide over mental anguish inflicted by the trans agenda. Riley Gaines offers her insights regarding women's sports, while Kentucky Republican Senator Rand Paul provides political commentary. Other notables include Libs of TikTok creator Chaya Raichik, former Facebook intelligence analyst Kara Frederick, and PornHub founder Dr. Laurie Betito.

Over the course of more than two hours, the Starbucks reveal the reality that purveyors of unnatural vice have a chokehold on our nation's children, and they explain all of its manifestations. *Why* the war is being waged is best summed up by one of the many young people they interviewed, who said, "I think that China's laughing at us. I think that Russia's laughing at us. And I think that you can't have a strong country if you have confused citizens." That is precisely why this issue is so crucial to the future of our nation.

TNA senior editor Rebecca Terrell interviewed Landon recently to discuss her goals in making the documentary and her continued work to save our children through her nonprofit Freedom Forever. The following is an abridged version of the interview, which is available in its entirety at TheNewAmerican.com.

The New American: Landon, thank you so much for taking the time away from your own family to talk with us about saving families everywhere. Tell us a bit about what led you and Robby to produce the film.

Landon Starbuck: Sure. Well, I came from the music industry as a Billboard-charting artist, and I left the industry because of the exploitation within it. My husband was an award-winning director, directing

some of the biggest stars in Hollywood, and he also left. Ultimately it was a stand for our values and raising our young family. We wanted to be in an environment that is actually conducive to raising kids with morals and values. We ended up moving to Tennessee, and we wanted to use our gifts in a way that was going to help move the culture forward. I also started a nonprofit called Freedom Forever, to combat child exploitation, and I found that … instead of getting to do the work that I want to do that I know is necessary with policy change and grassroots efforts, I was just spending most of my time convincing people that these things were actually happening. I reached out to my husband, and I said, "We need to make a film that has all of these dots connected for people. Because with the censorship on social media, everyone is getting a different reality, and they're not seeing things that are happening. And so, we felt like this is something that's needed and could serve the American people, specifically, and wake them up and activate them to reverse course.

TNA: You do bring together all those angles in *The War on Children*. I counted eight — these are the things you identify as the "weapons" in the war on children: education, entertainment, the news, politics, big tech, medicine, nonprofits, and the corporations that finance them. Did you originally start with that outline when you storyboarded the documentary, or was this something that grew organically as you realized how many heads this hydra has that you're trying to expose?

Starbuck: We did. I mean, we wanted to focus on all areas affecting children and families. What are the mechanisms? How did they come into power? How did this institutional capture originate? And so it was really important that when we told this story it wasn't just anecdotal things happening and, "Oh, isn't this bad?" We wanted to connect the dots for people to understand how these institutions actually work together, synergistically in some cases, to execute policy change and massive cultural change on a deep-rooted level, starting in our communities. And so we hope we did a good job of connecting those dots for people. But yes, we put a substantial amount of time into constructing that so that when we went to go film, we were able to choose the right stories to illustrate that, because we feel like the power of other people's stories that are actually living out this nightmare was what was going to connect to people on an emotional and deep level.

The New American

Crusader: Landon Starbuck saw the trans agenda firsthand in the entertainment industry. She and her husband, a former Hollywood movie director, bravely decided to expose it.

TNA: Yes, it's a very tangled web that you do a good job of untangling. In doing so you interviewed a number of fascinating people, from Senator Rand Paul and his wife, to swimmer Riley Gaines. You also interviewed relative unknowns — a young person who has detransitioned, a poor mother who lost her daughter to suicide over the trans agenda, and some other young people, too. I have to ask — which was your favorite interview and why?

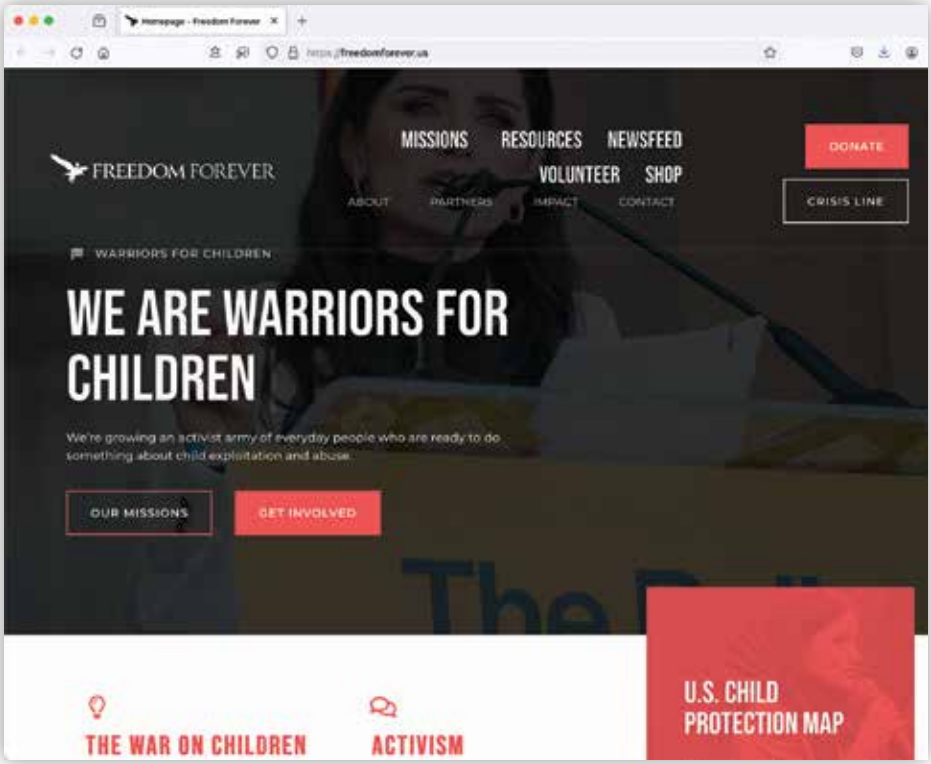
Starbuck: That's a good question. My favorite interview … I guess when I think of favorite, I think of something "fun." You know, none of this was "fun," per se. But I think I would say it was very impactful for me to interview the mom of Yaeli [a teenage girl who committed suicide after "transitioning" to a boy], because something happened spiritually in that interview. It was very hard to keep it together as the person interviewing this mom. But we're talking about this war, and wars have death. Wars have real consequences. And I'm actually sitting across, feeling this woman's pain, sitting in this space with her, and realizing that it's not just her daughter who has lost her life. It's countless others, and the next generation of all these children whose bodies have been maimed and mutilated. Having this awareness of how much pain this war is actually tolling on families, it was very impactful for me. And so, I think that was the one that I still think about. I still think about the interview and just even how it happened. I kinda had to fight for it. We were out of budget, but I felt so strongly, and they were like, "Okay, let's do it on Zoom." I said, "No, no, no, this has to be in person. This is so important!" And it ended up being a really important part of this documentary, changing so many minds and hearts on this issue. I was so grateful to Yaeli's mom [Abigail Martinez] for being a part of the documentary.

TNA: You touched on something there that I thought of as I was watching it. It's a very long documentary — more than

two hours. Of course, it had to be to contain all your points. But I have to admit I carved out an intermission for myself, not just because of the quantity of material but because of the hideousness of it. This is literal child abuse, molestation, destruction. I couldn't help but wonder while watching it: How did they keep their spirits up while making it?

Starbuck: People ask me this all the time because of what we do every day with fighting child exploitation or walking alongside families who are in horrific sexual-abuse trauma, survivors of child trafficking, sex trafficking. It does take a toll, and it's really important to have those boundaries. When it's family time, that stuff shuts off. But my faith has really been able to give me the means to fight this battle. I can't do it on my own strength, or my own intellect, or energy. It's a powerful thing that happens when — for me, surrendering my life to Jesus transformed my life. Because every aspect that I come up short in is filled by that spiritual strength. That's really what keeps me going and able at the end of the day to say, "This isn't mine. I can't wear this. I give it to God." Because you can't solve all the world's problems, and you can't wear the weight of them. So having those boundaries and keeping that spiritual focus at the center of all this helps with perspective and energy management and emotional management to be able to deal with this evil.

We wanted to connect the dots for people to understand how these institutions actually work together, synergistically in some cases, to execute policy change and massive cultural change on a deep-rooted level, starting in our communities.



The truth will set you free: Landon Starbuck founded Freedom Forever, a nonprofit dedicated to ending the perverting of children.

TNA: And I imagine that spiritual armor helps you push back against all of the attacks I'm sure you're under. I've read in a number of media outlets stories lambasting you. *Rolling Stone* was one of them. They attacked your methods for obtaining interviews with people from the Left. They said you were deceptive and tried to hide your identities and goals. What do you have to say in your defense?

Starbuck: I actually thought the *Rolling Stone* piece in many ways helped bring people to us, to watch the documentary. It's sad that in their minds it's just the worst thing in the world that we're stopping child mutilation. And in our minds, and in people with their sanity, we're asking, "Oh my gosh! You guys are against this?!" So I think that they overplay their hand, when they get so comfortable using the term "gender affirmative care," and then people actually put two and two together and say, "Oh, they mean mutilating boys' genitals and little girls' breasts. That's actually what that means!" I think that makes them look radical and dangerous and extreme in their views. So I think it had a different effect of bringing people to us. But, you know, they couldn't pick apart the documentary. They couldn't identify anything that was not factual, inaccurate, or contrived. They couldn't pick apart anything in the documentary, so they had to dig through emails of disgruntled people that we had originally reached out to who are activists, to say, "Oh, well, they didn't say who the director was." It's so funny because, being in the industry for so long, a lot of that is not industry standard. You're not entitled to know who the director is and who the producer is for every project you submit yourself for in a casting. So, you know, it's just not industry standard to always do that. It wasn't to be deceptive. In a lot of cases, this was an ongoing production, and in many cases it changed hands of who owned the doc and how we got it out. Many times. So we feel like everything we did was above board and we would be happy to release full-length interviews or emails or whatever it is, should that ever come to a legal dispute. So we're ready for that.

I think that it's a very healthy thing, especially when you're raising children, to pull them away from the effects of that advertising power, that consumerism power, that need to constantly acquire stuff, and go back to our roots of growing our own garden and being more self-sufficient and empowered.

TNA: True, and you were giving people an open forum to come and defend their views. Plus, you made a good point: There is no such thing as bad advertising. The negative campaign against you is backfiring. So, bring it on, right?

Starbuck: It really is, and it's interesting how many didn't actually. We were surprised at, you know, this documentary is the biggest documentary on the Right, I guess you could say — I don't see it as a political documentary — but you know, the fact that we had over 50 million downloads without spending one dime in ads or marketing? And then the Left doesn't report on this, and the mainstream media doesn't really report. I think that's very telling.

TNA: It is very telling. You can tell a man by his enemies, and you can do the same for a documentary. And as I said before, everyone needs to see this one. But you didn't just make this documentary to complain about the problem. You issue several calls to action during the course of the film. One is for people to boycott companies that back all of this transgender perversion. But it seems to me that if you boycott everyone, you'll soon have no vendors left (thanks to ESG). So let's talk about the main takeaways, because I know that you and Robby didn't invest all the time, energy, and resources into this documentary simply to complain about a problem without providing solutions. What are your main suggestions for fixing these problems?

AP Images

Speaking out: Senator Rand Paul (R-Ky.) is one of many interviewed in the documentary. He calls the exploitation of children "absurd and horrific."

Starbuck: I'm so glad you asked that question, because I wanted people, after they watched this documentary, to feel empowered with specific actions that they could take. And so, I wrote something called "The Parenting Revolution" manual. It has concrete steps, actions, nonnegotiables that every family needs to be aware of, and steps to take to strengthen their families and protect their children. And it's available for free when you subscribe at my nonprofit. The website is FreedomForever.us. So, you can get that manual. Read it. We've been getting great feedback about how it's just straight to the point, you know. No fluff. Just what needs to change. And my approach to the boycotts is that sometimes it feels overwhelming. Don't do this, don't do this! It's like being on a diet and saying, "Don't have a donut!" And then all you can think about is a donut. It's so much easier to transform your way of thinking. "I'm in control. I'm empowered. This is my money I worked hard for. And I'm going to vet any gym I go to. I'm going to ask the questions before I sign my name and swipe my credit card." Put these people in a position of having to earn our trust and our money, rather than us having to constantly be in a reactive state of, "Oh, of course, they partner with GLSEN, guess we have to cancel this and not shop here!" Of course, there are some unavoidables. I get that; it's just the way that America runs. But if we can make more conscious decisions of, "Who do I want to support. Where do I want to get my meat from?" — little changes really add up. We're at a place where we never will go to Target, ever again. It's not a loss. It's fine. I don't even think of it as "Oh, avoid Target." I just feel like I don't want to shop there. Instead, I get these things from my local farmers market. I think the pull away from corporatism, which actually is not just about money, is about influence. Something happens when you're going in there and just consuming, consuming, wasting your money. I think that it's a very healthy thing, especially when you're raising children, to pull them away from the effects of that advertising power, that consumerism power, that need to constantly acquire stuff, and go back to our roots of growing our own garden and being more self-

Reese/peopleimages.com/Adobe Stock

Family rules: Landon Starbuck has written "The Parenting Revolution" manual with specific steps and "nonnegotiables" families can follow to protect their children against the trans agenda.

sufficient and empowered. "Do I really need this? Do I really need to waste my money on this?" are questions we need to ask. Deep, transformative change can happen to better a lot of families.

TNA: That is the message that you're bringing to people — one of hope. I noticed that, too, in the documentary, especially during your interviews with teens and young adults, who across the board agreed that once they have children, they will never let them have access to social media, or greatly restrict their access to screens. What were some other hopeful things that you pulled from your experience of producing the film?

Starbuck: Seeing how many normal people paid to watch this film and share it with others, to the magnitude of 50 million. These are normal people buying this film. It's not George Soros funding it. No typical Hollywood tricks to beef up their numbers to create an illusion of a film being successful. That's been the most amazing thing, that normal people are sick of this garbage. And they are looking for ways to save their families, to change their children's mindsets, pull them away from indoctrination centers. They're making plans. And for parents that have pushed back and feel overwhelmed, we all have gone through that. People who are at a place of recognizing this, we all went through that really uncomfortable journey of waking up little by little, with Covid, and indoctrination of education, and all of these things. It's not an easy journey, but there is a point of it where you are empowered. You are left hopeful and empowered because you realize all along you've had this power, and it just took going through these difficult periods of realizing that power. Every single one of us changed our buying habits, stopped indoctrinating our children, took away social-media devices before kids have the social-media defense skills to withstand the dangers of porn and predators. If we just make these simple changes, we are in power. These people do not have the hold that we've been indoctrinated to think they do over us.

TNA: Please tell us how we can find the documentary and learn more.

Starbuck: Please go to TheWarOnChildren.com, and you can find all the ways that you can watch. You can support my nonprofit FreedomForever.us, combating all forms of child exploitation. You can follow my husband, Robby Starbuck, and myself, Landon Starbuck. We're always working toward change and leading activism, and doing whatever we can to save this generation. ■

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Classical Education: The Good-news Solution for Attacks on Our Children

by Dr. Duke Pesta

This issue of *The New American* exposes the myriad ways that government and culture wage war on our kids. It is ironic, cynical, and evil how progressive elites treat adults like helpless children, while simultaneously burdening the youngest kids with very dark and adult issues, including climate change, transgenderism, LGTBQ advocacy, and critical race theory. During the long arc of American education, there was one bulwark that helped insulate young minds from such pernicious assaults: classical education.

It is absolutely true that the origins of American public schools were steeped in statism, socialism, and rank psychologism. Nevertheless, for a significant period of time, students were exposed to a classical curriculum that taught them to think critically, to read the great books of Western culture, and to experience a wide and pluralistic spectrum of worldviews. This one great gift helped keep the country more or less grounded, preparing educated citizens to understand the nation's origins, triumphs, and struggles; to admire our enduring and ever-tested idealism; and to think critically about those aspects of our civilization that required change — all without throwing out the cultural baby along with the progressive bathwater.

English author, philosopher, and Christian apologist G.K. Chesterton once observed that "Education is simply the soul of a society as it passes from one generation to another." This is the most succinct and accurate description of classical education to be found. The very good news — and one of the most hopeful beacons of light in the darkening twilight of Western culture — is that classical education remains robust, time-tested, and accessible. The great works of Western art, literature, history, philosophy, and economics are but a click away on the internet, stocked in bookstores, and shelved at public and private libraries, uncensored and available for universal consumption and consultation. The embers of this once-great educational conflagration still glow hot and bright, waiting to be stoked into a blaze that will sustain our nation, if we choose to rekindle our interest in and take control of our children's schooling. Equally encouraging is the fact that the intellectual heat and light of classical education flickers brightly in many private academies and Christian schools, select universities and colleges, and especially the burgeoning homeschool movement. How thrilling that in the early 21st century, millions of homeschool parents have rallied around a form of classical, home-based education that gave rise centuries ago to the genera-

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Dr. Duke Pesta is executive director at FreedomProject Academy, a classical school that offers online classes in real time for kindergarten through high school.

Great minds: Classical education has its roots in the thought and culture of Ancient Greece and Rome, and provides the foundation of Western civilization. It should be taught and celebrated, not ignored or condemned. Shown is Raphael's *The School of Athens*, painted in 1511.

tion of thinkers who founded this country and secured its many liberties.

Class, Classics, Classicism, and Classical Education: A Rose by Any Other Name

The concept of classical education has a long, varied, and often protean history. Of course, when we hear the phrase "classical education," our minds are carried back to the "Classical" world of the ancient Greeks and Romans. And this is a perfectly appropriate starting point. Athens and Rome are two of the three founding cities out of which Western culture flourished and expanded. From these cultures emanated such concepts as democracy and republican forms of government, and they innovated stunning advancements in philosophy, poetry, sculpture, theater, historical writing, statecraft, the prosecution of war, architecture, mathematics, engineering, biology, and medicine, to name but a few. A visit to Washington, D.C. — the nation's capital and the site of the Capitol — reveals the architectural influence of the ancients, recreated in our major government buildings with their columns, domes, arches, and marble colonnades. Like modern America, ancient Athens and Rome were innovative and resilient places of debate, election, faction, rhetoric, duty, public service, corruption, and patriotism, overflowing with schools, philosophical groups, private tutors, intellectual communities, and impressive libraries, monuments, and temples.

When considering "Classical" culture, Jerusalem would be the third ancient city to earn the title of "cradle of Western culture." If Greece and Rome provided the form and structure of our government and law, then surely Jerusalem gave us our moral code and spiritual ethos, from the creation story in Genesis, to the Mosaic code, to the Sermon on the Mount, and to the letters of Saint Paul. From this source, classical education inherited and expanded on the idea that God is the architect of our rights and the judge of our moral decisions. This legacy is ultimately the reason that it was Western culture — under the aegis of God's providence — that first developed and enshrined in law such precepts as civil rights, women's rights, protections for minorities, and the abolition of slavery. The Founding Fathers' wisdom in declaring that our rights emanate from the Creator alone — and not from the fickle hand of government manipulation — ushered in the only form of civilization capable of developing such broad and comprehensive human rights. These rights, paradoxically, are only universally "human" under the guidance of His creating and sustaining hand. Since the founding of our nation, classical education has been inextricably linked to this blessed paradox. It is also important to note that the Enlightenment did not materialize fully formed, like Athena sprung from the mind of Zeus. Rather, the so-called Age of Reason in the 18th century was deeply in debt to the relative tolerance, intellectual curiosity, and evolving science of the previous five Christian centuries. To this day, there are many cultures outside of the West that have experienced "enlightenments" but still lack these basic moral imperatives.

And so it is no overstatement to say that classical education has much to do with the "Classical" culture of the ancients. Related to this pedigree in more recent times, classical education has been cross-pollinated with "The Classics," those canonical, so-called Great Books that are must-reads for cultural literacy, intellectual preservation, and societal cohesion. While a good number of those books are the legacy of the ancients, many more are formally designated as "World Classics," spanning many different countries and time periods. The lack of classical education and the rejection of these books in the public schools and universities is a driving force behind the anarchic cultural disintegration we see across the country.

Finally, the idea of classical education has shifted slightly under the rise of homeschooling in the United States over the last few decades. The term "classical education" in this context is less broad and comprehensive, reflecting its appeal to evangelical Christians, many of whom are cautious about exposing children to ancient literature and culture that reflects pagan beliefs, or more modern texts steeped in skepticism, gratuitous

sex and violence, and postmodern moral relativity. For many of these families, the moral, cultural, and philosophical goals and outcomes remain the same as for more traditional and academic adherents of classical education, but instead of working their way through dense works such as *The Aeneid*, *The Divine Comedy*, *Gulliver's Travels*, or *Moby Dick*, homeschoolers are more likely to read modern, mass-marketed "versions" of these stories, pared down and scaled in tone and action for younger demographics. Such books are sold cheaply and in great numbers at thriving homeschool conventions.

Classical vs. Modern Education: Remember and Restore, Not Reject and Reinvent

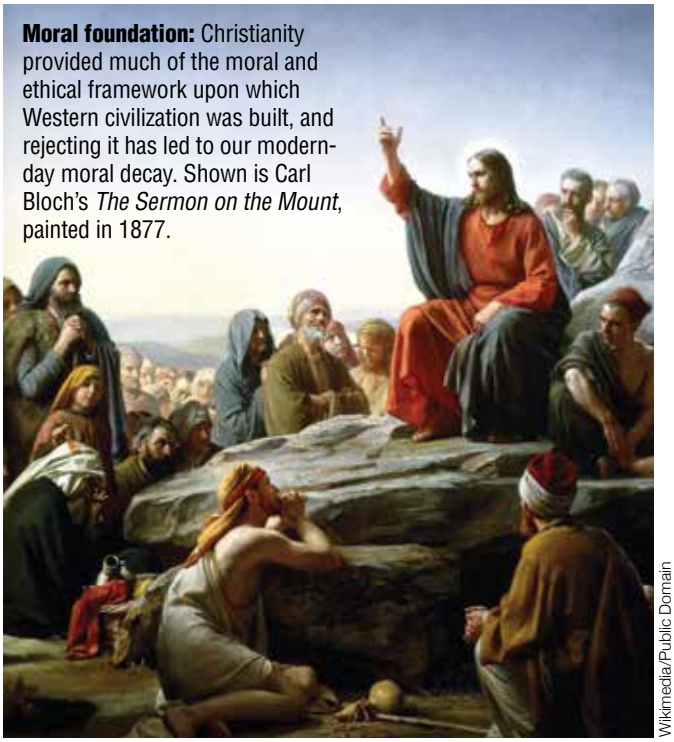
Contemporary education is forever rejecting the past and futilely reinventing the pedagogical wheel, jettisoning phonics, trashing the classics, and deconstructing math education to the point of incomprehension. Classical education, on the other hand, conserves, curates, and promotes the time-tested truths found in books, ideas, movements, and cultures. In a 1947 speech at Oxford University, Dorothy Sayers, that brilliant exemplar of a mind well cultivated, brings together all of these disparate origins and objectives of classical education. The gist of her argument is that classical education is a way of learning, not a set list of books or exercises or exams. It is a method, a program, and a worldview whose efficacy can be universally recognized by the degree to which it teaches students *how* to think, not *what* to think. To that end, the purpose of a classical education is to train the mind to approach all subjects rationally, and to recognize the value of reason, not only as a primary way of arriving at truth, but as one part of a complex human organism that includes body and soul, each of which has its own contributions to make in the development of what we call the educated "person."

Classical education rejects the contemporary idea that reason alone is sufficient for human progress and fulfillment. If that were true, courses in mathematics and science might constitute the entire curriculum. Rather, classical education foregrounds subjects such as Latin and logic, as well as courses on the Greek and Roman world, biblical wisdom, the Great Books, and economics — all of which give rise to the well-rounded Renaissance ideal of the polymath. The classically educated individual is conversant in a wide variety of subjects and is able to properly distinguish those disciplines fit for the soul, those fit for the mind, and those fit for the body, as well as how to integrate them. Classical education balances the practical demands of the material world with the humanistic requirements of right living and moral development.

For instance, it's not so much the way math is taught that makes it an appropriate subject for classical education. Instead, it is the emphasis placed on the relationship of math to all other disciplines in the curriculum, the holistic way that subjects are integrated, linked together, and ultimately subordinated to a higher ideal of what the aim and purpose of education should be. Math is, of course, rational and empirical, and in this sense, a mathematic sensibility is necessary for the mastery of logic, and even Latin, which requires a precision and exactness that might almost be termed "mathematical." By the same token, exercises in Latin declensions or time spent studying classical syllogisms can only reinforce the rigor and flexibility of thought required to succeed at math at the highest levels. The end game is not complete mastery of a particular subject at the expense of all others — a hallmark of the current "scientization" of education, whereby we create endlessly myopic specialists focused on increasingly rarefied and arcane bodies of knowledge.

Instead, classical education seeks to develop highly intuitive students who can function on multiple levels and are comfortable in multiple disciplines; in other words, students equally able to appreciate the vastness of forests without losing sight of the uniqueness of trees. A student trained classically is a student who recognizes that learning is a lifelong process, and who values the pleasure of learning for learning's sake. Kate Deddens, writing at the The Federalist, explains it as follows:

> Classical education pursues higher aims, opposing the modern view. When greater goals are pursued, subordinate goals are also attained. An obvious example is literacy. When education provides comprehension of challenging material,



Moral foundation: Christianity provided much of the moral and ethical framework upon which Western civilization was built, and rejecting it has led to our modern-day moral decay. Shown is Carl Bloch's *The Sermon on the Mount*, painted in 1877.

Wikimedia/Public Domain

the capacity to understand instruction manuals follows. But training students to read instruction manuals does not enable them to comprehend more beautiful, demanding, and beneficial writing.

And this is exactly how postmodern quackery such as Common Core proceeds to teach reading. Remove complex poetry and serious fiction from the English language arts classes; replace literature with tendentious and utilitarian prose, designed to inculcate a progressive worldview; and then stop reading books altogether in favor of excerpts and summaries.

Literacy is key. As important and necessary as STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) knowledge is, success in those fields still requires deft and sophisticated readers. This reality is too often beyond the grasp of utilitarian reformers on both the Left and the Right who think that the answer to the politicization of America's classrooms is to trivialize or cancel the humanities altogether. Becoming efficient and advanced in science, technology, engineering, and math requires an exceptional reading prowess. Even the numerical purity of arithmetic has to be "read," and decoding the deeply syntactic poetry of Milton has a great deal in common with the deciphering required to contemplate complex equations in physics. Currently, in the classes I teach at the university, my freshman students have about a ninth-grade reading level. An alarming subset of that group expresses a deep hatred for reading and writing, and increasing numbers admit that they had never read a book cover to cover before enrolling in college. Thirty years ago, students came to college knowing a good deal less than they should, but at least they were aware of — and in many cases embarrassed by — their own educational deficiencies. Such students could be taught. Today, a much more pervasive illiteracy is buttressed by an impenetrable veneer of indifference and ideological condescension.

Anti-classical Education: Critical Lenses and the Death of Reading

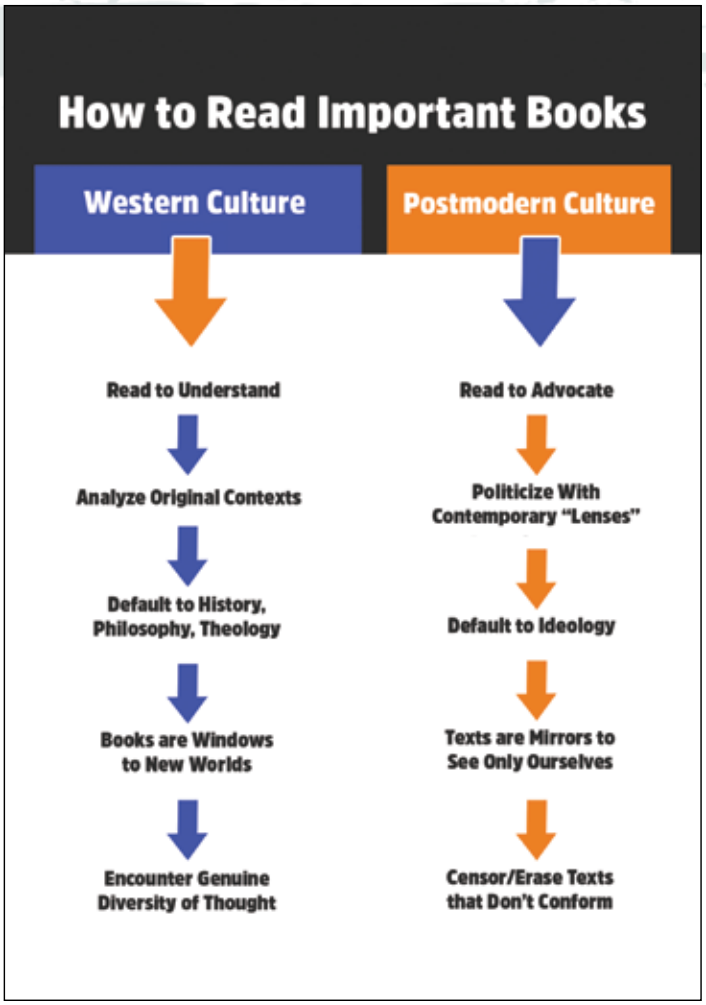
In order to fully understand the idea that diverse and intellectually independent reading is our best and last hope to preserve Western culture, we must consider how the anti-classical educators who glower over our schools — from pre-kindergarten through graduate school — have warped reading into a socialistic hermeneutic that indoctrinates instead of educates. Rather than allowing students to read books as written — enabling them to encounter the original ideas and intellects of the authors — postmodern education requires that books be filtered through progressive "lenses." In universities today, to read Shakespeare is not to grapple with his artistic achievements or cultural contexts. Instead, students who know nothing about England in the 16th and 17th centuries, or about the development of Elizabethan drama, are required to encounter Shakespeare through alien and irrelevant postmodern ideologies such as Marxism, feminism, environmentalism, queer theory, and deconstruction.

Through these "lenses," the original meanings and contexts of Shakespeare and his world are erased, and what students discover in their place is nothing less than warmed-over Marxist dialectic, as books are transformed into agitprop for toxic politics. This form of textual "colonization" is not only found in universities, but it is currently being peddled in public schools under the name of pedagogies such as critical race theory. Why are postmodern lenses required to "see" a work of literature? A Marxist reading of Shakespeare tells us nothing at all about him, his art, or his culture. The only lens needed to understand Shakespeare is the one that brings him and his plays into sharper focus.

In the real world, lenses allow weak eyes to see correctly. These postmodern lenses, however, distort the meaning of books, turning them into something far removed from what the author produced. It's as if a student with perfect eyesight was forced to wear someone else's glasses: The lenses would blur the text, not clarify it. According to Professor Christopher Norris, progressive lenses must eradicate the original meaning of books.

Getty Images Plus

Tech literacy: STEM fields are being pushed in schools these days, while the importance of literacy is downplayed. However, strong reading and communication skills are necessary for success in STEM.



In a stark example of the socialist nature of postmodern "reading," he writes, "We can't read texts, but we can read ideologies." In this way, postmodern readers overthrow the integrity of books in favor of their own political advocacy positions. Ironically, these politicized readings claim a linguistic and cultural stability for themselves that they deny for the books they colonize. According to them, their writings are epistemologically sound and comprehensible, unlike all other writings, which are unreliable and unavailable to modern readers. For a visual example of how traditional reading strategies compare to postmodern interventions, see the chart included on this page.

The antidote to this type of postmodern reading is, of course, classical education. Humane readings of texts do not act as *mirrors* for our own politics, but function as *windows* that reveal new worlds. George Orwell's 1949 novel *Nineteen Eighty-Four* eerily predicts the coming consequences of postmodern reading strategies:

> By 2050 — earlier, probably — all real knowledge of Oldspeak will have disappeared. The whole literature of the past will have been destroyed. Chaucer, Shakespeare, Milton, Byron — they'll exist only in Newspeak versions, not merely changed into something different, but actually changed into something contradictory of what they used to be.… The whole climate of thought will be different. In fact, there will *be* no thought, as we understand it now. Orthodoxy means not thinking — not needing to think. Orthodoxy is unconsciousness.

The dystopian approach to knowledge sketched by Orwell is already radicalizing our universities, transforming them from sites of intellectual exploration to places of conformity and dangerous groupthink. In 1961, C.S. Lewis in *An Experiment in Criticism* offered a brilliant defense of humane reading, one that makes the definitive case for classical education:

> Through literature … we see through the eyes of others and by doing this, we expand our horizons and our understanding. We want to see with other eyes, to imagine with other imaginations, to feel with other hearts.… In reading great literature, I become a thousand men and yet remain myself. The man who is contented to be only himself, and therefore less a self, is in prison. My own eyes are not enough for me, I will see through the eyes of others.

Classical Education in the 21st Century

Recognizing the dangers posed to the Republic as public schools reject classical education and transform classrooms into sites of progressive ideology, anti-Americanism, and left-wing advocacy, FreedomProject was created in 2009.

FreedomProject Academy (FPA) is dedicated to offering alternatives to the monopolistic and tendentious culture of progressive education. FPA offers college-ready education online, based exclusively on subject mastery and a rigorous curriculum that allows students to move seamlessly into college or career.

FPA offers a fully accredited, classical education for kids from kindergarten through high school, and is rooted firmly in Judeo-Christian values as promoted in the Constitution by our Founding Fathers, who strove to guarantee the preservation of our God-given liberties. Our live classes are delivered online through interactive classrooms to students in all 50 states and a dozen foreign countries.

FPA is also proud to serve missionary and military families overseas who seek a classical education for their children. Live classes are recorded, uploaded, and made available 24/7 so that parents can view and evaluate every minute of our educational programs. FPA believes that parents are primarily responsible for their kids' education, and we partner with them at every level, unlike the public schools, who increasingly seek to undermine parental rights. Each of our educational tracks includes a path to an accredited diploma, allowing students to begin college or career at a high level.

We also provide self-paced, pre-recorded, and homeschool tracks for those

Better option: FreedomProject Academy provides a classical education with live online instruction, making it a great alternative to government schools.

FreedomProject Academy

families who opt for non-live classes. This initiative is our Anytime program, which offers pre-recorded learning that is self-paced, parent-guided, and available around the clock. Within the allotted academic window for each subject, students can view classes at their own convenience and finish the assigned reading, quizzes, and examinations in ways best suited for them. Students can attend weekly live sessions with teachers and other students and can get assistance from an academic counselor. All Anytime classes are graded by FPA, and those grades count toward the student's school transcript. We also provide tutors to assist students who require a more individual focus or remediation.

FreedomProject Academy further provides an innovative Partnership Program. We team up with churches and private schools to stream our classes into brick-and-mortar classrooms across the country. This makes it possible for faith-based schools to flourish, because FPA offers all of the curriculum, homework, assessments, and grading that schools require to remain financially stable. Many of these churches are hubs of activity on the weekends, but are largely dormant from Monday through Friday. In very cost-efficient ways, our Partnership Program can turn these underused spaces into thriving private and Christian schools. What better way to restore American values than to bring the worlds of faith and education together again?

Modern technology has moved the needle in the educational landscape by introducing digitally enabled learning environments. Many schools are incorporating online classes to help make education more effortless and accessible. FreedomProject Academy created the template for live online learning platforms. The school is dedicated to using state-of-the-art technology to provide rigorous, subject-based education, free from political manipulation, progressive activism, and the inappropriate sexualization and racialization of the classroom. FPA is committed to educating children to become highly literate critical thinkers who possess a deep understanding of Western culture, accurate American history, science, and math.

With each year that goes by, the public-school students who join FPA are further behind the grade levels where they ought to be. We have a dynamic and comprehensive set of programs designed to bring students up to grade level in all subjects. And, unlike the public schools, where students are chained artificially to their peer groups, we have the ability to allow students to jump ahead in some classes, and step back in others. A gifted math student, for instance, can skip ahead two grades in order to meet his or her potential with numbers, but that same student might also need to step back a grade in reading. We can help improve progress in those subjects that do not come as easily. In short, we can repair the educational damage and neglect inflicted by the public schools.

Beyond plunging grades, cratering test scores, and politicized classrooms, the public schools push more and more social-emotional learning every year, at the expense of knowledge and skills-based education. FreedomProject Academy is designed to pick up the educational slack and restore the classical methods that gave rise to American exceptionalism, a worldview that helped make the United States preeminent among nations. Our curriculum, developed in-house, is free of Common Core, critical race theory, and social-emotional learning, including all forms of progressive sex, gender, and sexuality education. We believe that the oversight of such issues belongs to the parents.

We strongly believe that education is the most important way to create moral and discerning children. Our program stresses liberty, individualism, free markets, critical thinking, and the importance of personal achievement and meritocracy. We strive to create the next generation of great patriot leaders, and our mission is to offer the best possible education for God, faith, country, and family.

FreedomProject Academy is enrolling students for the 2024-2025 school year through mid-July 2024. For more information, see FPA's ad on page 29. ■

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The "Puck" Stops Here

During a Cleveland Monsters hockey game on April 11 in Akron, Ohio, a heart-pounding incident unfolded as a vigilant man shielded a young boy from a flying hockey puck, WKYC reported.

Asia Davis, the boy's mother, recounted the harrowing moment when a puck suddenly hurtled toward her four-year-old son, Nasir, threatening injury. Video footage captured the heart-stopping scene as the puck careened toward Nasir, only to be deflected by the man beside him, later identified as Andrew Podolak.

Davis took to the internet seeking to express her gratitude to the unidentified hero who had selflessly protected her son. Later, she had the opportunity to connect with Podolak, who modestly expressed his belief that fate had brought him to that precise moment to safeguard Nasir.

Podolak's spontaneous act of heroism not only spared Nasir from potential harm, but also united the community in a shared moment of gratitude and celebration.

Subway's Newest "Hero"

At a Subway restaurant in Indianapolis, a quick-thinking man, Gabriel Pitzulo, sprang into action to protect a worker in distress.

As Pitzulo, a former high-school wrestler turned welder, entered the establishment for lunch on March 22, he noticed a commotion and sensed trouble. A man was harassing and threatening a female employee, escalating to the point of physical assault. Without hesitation, Pitzulo intervened. Drawing on his background in combat sports, Pitzulo managed to restrain the man without causing serious harm, showing remarkable control and compassion in a volatile situation.

Fox News reported that video footage captured the decisive moment that Pitzulo, clad in a dark jacket, tackled the man, ensuring he could not harm the employee. With the situation under control, others in the restaurant locked the doors and alerted law enforcement. Pitzulo's actions were praised by police, who arrived and took the attacker into custody.

The assailant, identified as Daniel Saunders, was charged with battery resulting in bodily injury and disorderly conduct. The restaurant manager expressed gratitude to Pitzulo for his brave intervention, offering him free sandwiches for life as a token of appreciation.

Reflecting on the incident, Pitzulo expressed concern for the female employee's safety, noting that she appeared defenseless against the attacker's threats.

In response to the attention his actions garnered, he also emphasized the importance of standing up for others, particularly innocent individuals facing danger. He rejected notions of toxic masculinity, advocating instead for a culture of courage and protection within communities, and attributed his bravery to divine guidance.

Fiery Rescue

On a Saturday morning in Honolulu, William Kuahine, a volunteer firefighter and fuel transfer worker for Island Energy Services, found himself in a remarkable situation, according to KHON2. While running errands with his wife on March 22, Kuahine noticed smoke billowing from an apartment building in the Manoa neighborhood.

Responding to the unfolding emergency, Kuahine quickly assessed the situation and took action. He first ensured the safe evacuation of residents from unaffected units, guiding them to safety. Then, upon reaching the burning apartment, he attempted to alert its occupants, knocking on the door in a bid to warn them. When there was no response, Kuahine carefully tested the door for safety before entering the unit, accompanied by another bystander.

Inside the apartment, they were met with a daunting scene — flames engulfed the space, threatening to spread further. Despite the intense heat and smoke, Kuahine and his companion conducted a thorough search, confirming that no one was trapped inside.

Reflecting on the incident, Kuahine credited his training and sense of duty for guiding his actions. He emphasized the importance of community and expressed gratitude for the assistance of others who also stepped in to help during the crisis. Fortunately, no injuries were reported among the building's residents, thanks in part to their heroic intervention.

Following the incident, Kuahine received recognition from the local fire department, particularly from the crew of Manoa's Engine 22.

A Starry Reunion

In 1978, while teaching a high-school science class in Rochester, New York, Patrick Moriarty made a lighthearted promise to his students: They would gather together to witness the solar eclipse on April 8, 2024, which would pass through Rochester. Little did he know that this joke would turn into a heartwarming reunion nearly 50 years later.

As the years passed, Moriarty kept the promise in the back of his mind. With the advent of social media, he created a Facebook group to reconnect with former students and see if they remembered his pledge. To his surprise, the group gained traction, and hundreds of his former students expressed interest in attending the eclipse event.

Moriarty went all out, hiring a local pizzeria to cater the gathering and purchasing 130 pairs of eclipse glasses, *The Washington Post* reported. The atmosphere was filled with laughter and nostalgia as old classmates reminisced and joked about the passing years. Despite the decades that had gone by, the bond between teacher and students remained strong.

Before the eclipse, Moriarty returned to his role as educator, giving a lesson on the science behind the phenomenon. When the eclipse finally occurred, it was a breathtaking sight, but the real magic was in the shared experience of former students coming together to fulfill a decades-old promise.

Reflecting on the event, Moriarty expressed gratitude for the opportunity to have made a positive impact on his students' lives. The reunion reaffirmed his belief in the lasting impact teachers can have, and left him with a sense of fulfillment. ■

— Raven Clabough

The Importance of Vice Presidents and Running Mates

While the vice president is largely viewed as a figurehead in American politics, history shows that a presidential candidate's choice of a running mate can have enormous consequences.

by Steve Byas

Who will presumptive GOP presidential nominee Donald Trump select for his running mate? Will he pick someone who solidly supports America First, or place more emphasis on selecting someone who will increase his chances of getting back into the White House? The question is hugely important, since whomever Trump selects could become president. As history shows, presidential candidates in the past have at times picked a running mate who holds dissimilar views, only for that running mate to become president.

While the Framers of the Constitution did not anticipate the role of the vice president to be that of a partisan political actor, and definitely had no inkling of the modern concept of a "running mate," that changed very early in American history with the rise of political parties.

In fact, the delegates at the 1787 Constitutional Convention devoted very little space in the new U.S. Constitution to the office of vice president. In Article II, which concerns the Executive Branch of the federal government, it was said of the office, "In Case of the Removal of the President from Office, or of his Death, Resignation, or Inability to discharge the Powers and Duties of the said Office, the Same shall devolve on the Vice President, and the Congress may by Law provide for the Case of Removal, Death, Resignation or Inability, both of the President and Vice President, declaring what Officer shall then act as President, and such Officer shall act accordingly, until the Disability be removed, or a President shall be elected."

Steve Byas is a university history and government instructor, and the author of History's Greatest Libels.

Poor choice: Donald Trump's selection of Mike Pence of Indiana might have helped Trump marginally in three states in the Midwest — Ohio,Michigan, and Wisconsin — but it is doubtful that Trump would ever ask Pence to run with him again.

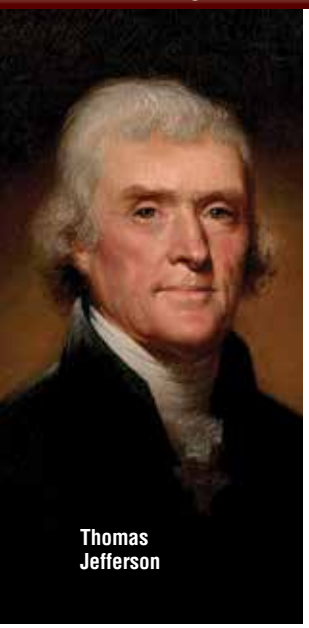
Wikimedia Commons/U.S. Secretary of Defense

Article I — which concerns the lawmaking, or legislative branch — also briefly mentioned the office: "The Vice President of the United States shall be President of the Senate, but shall have no Vote, unless they be equally divided."

The Federalist Papers (aka *The Federalist*) is a collection of newspaper articles written by three ardent supporters of the Constitution — James Madison, Alexander Hamilton, and John Jay — explaining and arguing for the Constitution's ratification in New York state. Hamilton, who had very little to say about the office of vice president, wrote in *The Federalist*, No. 68, "The Vice President is to be chosen in the same manner with the President [through the vote of presidential electors]." He added, "The appointment of an extraordinary person as Vice President has been objected to as superfluous, if not mischievous. It has been alleged that it would have been preferable to have authorized the Senate to elect out of their own body an officer fitting that description [as president of the Senate]."

Hamilton explained that there needed to be an officer who could, if necessary, break tie votes in the Senate. "And to take the senator of any state from his seat as a senator, to place him in that of President of the Senate, would be to exchange, in regard to the state from which he came, a constant for a contingent vote."

And, of course, as all presidents of the United States are mortal, there is the consideration that someone must be ready to take over in case there is a vacancy in the office. "The other consideration is that ... the Vice President may occasionally be-



Partisan politics: Virginian Thomas Jefferson joined with New Yorker Aaron Burr in the presidential election of 1800. The election was a tie, so it went to the House of Representatives. Alexander Hamilton persuaded his fellow Federalists to not vote, giving Republican Jefferson the victory. Burr never forgave Hamilton, and later killed him in a duel.

come a substitute for the President in the supreme executive magistracy."

It is in this scenario — the vice president becoming the president's substitute — that the question of who is vice president becomes most important. After all, eight presidents have died in office; four by an assassin's bullet, and four by natural causes.

Following the assassination of President John F. Kennedy, there was another concern. What if President Kennedy had *not* died from his horrific head wound, but had been rendered unable to function in the office? A president in an extended comatose state would create all sorts of frightening possibilities. This led to the enactment of the 25th Amendment, which provided that a president who was incapacitated either mentally or physically could be removed from the office in an action initiated by the vice president. It also clearly stated that the vice president actually becomes president in case of a presidential vacancy, rather than simply becoming a "substitute," or an "acting president."

Running Mates Become the Norm

Once two political parties emerged prior to the 1800 presidential election, Thomas Jefferson, the candidate of the Republican Party (not the same as the modern party by that name), needed a "running mate" from the North, as Jefferson was a Virginian from the South. This would "balance the ticket" geographically, thus drawing votes from the North that Jefferson might otherwise not be able to get.

Aaron Burr of New York became that running mate.

The original method of choosing the president and vice president, under the Constitution, was that presidential electors were to vote for two different individuals. The person finishing first would become president, and the person finishing second would become vice president. Thus, John Adams became the first vice president under George Washington, and following the election of 1796, Thomas Jefferson became vice president under John Adams.

By 1800, Adams was the candidate of the Federalist Party, nominated by the Federalist leaders in the House of Representatives to oppose Jefferson. Jefferson was the logical choice as the Republican Party's hopeful.

Electors supporting Jefferson also named Burr on their ballots, resulting in a tie between them, narrowly ahead of Adams. As no one had won in the electoral vote, the constitutional stipulation that the House of Representatives would then choose the president while the Senate would elect the vice president went into effect. This created the odd situation in which the lame-duck Federalist-controlled House would choose between two Republicans.

Rather than step aside, Burr saw this as his opportunity, hoping the Federalists in the House would prefer him over their hated rival, Jefferson. This is a prime example of why the selection of a running mate is so important. It is, as with a presidential nomination, important to select candidates for high office with moral character, which Burr did not have.

Fortunately, Alexander Hamilton — the leader of the Federalist Party — had the moral character that Burr lacked, and while he was a bitter rival of Jefferson's, he urged his fellow Federalists in the House to either vote for Jefferson or abstain, and let the Republicans pick Jefferson over Burr. After 30 ballots, Jefferson was chosen as president. Relations between Burr and Hamilton continued to deteriorate, and Burr eventually killed Hamilton in a duel.

For the next few years, the office of vice president did not seem very important, as the office of secretary of state was the principal steppingstone to the presidency. James Madison, secretary of state for Jefferson, followed him as president, and his secretary of state, James Monroe, followed Madison. John Quincy Adams, secretary of state for Monroe, defeated Andrew Jackson in the election of 1824. (This led to the second, and so far the last, time that the House of Representatives elected the president, as neither Adams nor Jackson received a majority of the vote in the Electoral College).

Still, after Vice President Martin Van Buren won the White House in 1836, it was not until George Bush followed President Ronald Reagan in 1988 that a "sitting" vice president was elected again.

But that did not mean the office was unimportant, especially when President William Henry Harrison died only 32 days into his term, to be succeeded by his vice president, John Tyler, in 1841. Vice President Millard Fillmore succeeded President Zachary Taylor upon Taylor's death in 1850.

The practice of "balancing the ticket" did not end with the Jefferson-Burr team of 1800. The regional balancing act of Democrat Andrew Jackson of Tennessee with New York's Van Buren was successful in 1832, as was the ticket of the Whig

Party's Harrison of Indiana and Tyler of Virginia in 1840.

However, the consequences of the Harrison-Tyler ticket should be a powerful argument against "balancing" the ticket for ideological reasons. Harrison was the candidate for the Whig Party, but Tyler was a former Democrat. Tyler had left the Democratic Party, not for any philosophical differences with their policy positions, but rather over personality differences with the man who during that time dominated the Democratic Party — Andrew Jackson. Tyler opposed the key points of the Whig platform, which included opposition to a nationally chartered Bank of the United States, federal spending on infrastructure (then called "internal improvements"), and high protective tariffs. Once being thrust into the White House by Harrison's untimely demise, Tyler proceeded to veto practically every Whig proposal that passed Congress.

A question must be asked: What is the point of selecting a running mate in order to win an election, if the result is that the party's positions would be blocked were that person to become president?

A Republican and Democratic Ticket

Perhaps the most unusual ticket was put together in 1864, in the midst of the Civil War. Republican Abraham Lincoln had been elected president in 1860 with only 40 percent of the popular vote because the Democratic Party had split into three factions. With the casualties of the war continuing into the hundreds of thousands, Lincoln's chances for reelection in 1864 were diminishing. The anti-war Democrats in the North had won several seats in the 1862 off-year congressional elections, and Lincoln knew he needed to somehow unite behind himself all those in the North wanting to continue the war.

This is why Andrew Johnson, a former U.S. senator from Tennessee (the only member from a state that seceded who refused to leave his post in the Senate) and a Democrat, was made Lincoln's running mate in 1864. Johnson was for keeping the South in the Union, and would give pro-Union Democrats added incentive to support Lincoln's reelection. However, Radical Republicans — those who desired a war of vengeance on the South — were suspicious of Johnson. For that election, the Republicans used the name Union Party. This ploy certainly worked, and Lincoln won, but after John Wilkes Booth killed him in April 1865, the White House passed from a Republican to a Democrat.

Johnson actually continued many of Lincoln's intended policies, attempting to reunite the country during Reconstruction, but the Republicans understandably viewed Democrat Johnson with suspicion. Republicans who had tolerated the relatively more moderate Lincoln absolutely detested Johnson, and he endured an impeachment trial in the Senate, ultimately surviving by one vote. Neither party wanted him as their nominee in 1868.

The post-Civil War years saw little thought given to the office of vice president, except when President James Garfield was assassinated in 1881, putting Chester Arthur into the White House. But that led to little difference in policy, as both men were typical of the Republicans of that time period.

Teddy Roosevelt and the Progressive Era

That was not the case, however, in 1900, when President William McKinley, a Republican, was essentially given New York Governor Theodore (Teddy) Roosevelt as his running mate (presidential nominees did not simply pick their own running mates during this time period). New York Republicans, disenchanted with the "progressive" politics of Roosevelt, were seeking a way of getting him out of the governor's office. These New York Republicans were able to convince enough gullible national Republicans that his presence on the ticket would "unite" the party, arguing it made little difference who was vice president of the United States. However, it mattered a great deal when a left-wing anarchist assassinated McKinley in 1901.

Roosevelt, like other progressives, had little regard for constitutional restrictions on the power of elected officials. As president, he adopted what has been called the "stewardship theory" of presidential authority. In his view, unless the Constitution specifically said he *could not* do something, he *could* do it. Progressives saw the Constitution more as an impediment to their agenda than as a rule book to be followed.

Now, the progressive movement had political power, and they used it to begin the implementation of their Big Government programs. Whatever benefit Teddy Roosevelt brought to the ticket in the presidential election of 1900 for the Republicans was not worth the consequences of having him in the White House. While

Shortsighted: The Republican Party chose Theodore Roosevelt as William McKinley's vice president in 1900 in order to get Roosevelt out of New York politics. This led to the empowerment of the progressive movement, and the election of Democrat Woodrow Wilson in 1912 after a three-way race between Roosevelt, Taft, and Wilson.

McKinley was a reluctant interventionist in foreign nations, Roosevelt was a huge advocate of projecting American power around the world, extending the progressive policies abroad.

But Roosevelt wasn't finished when he left the White House in 1909. In 1912, he came out of retirement to run for president again in that year — this time on the Progressive Party ticket after he failed to take the Republican nomination away from the more conservative William Howard Taft — splitting the Republican vote and placing a fellow progressive, Democrat Woodrow Wilson, into the presidency. Wilson, of course, gave us the federal income tax (allowed by the 16th Amendment) and the creation of the Federal Reserve System.

Teddy Roosevelt's cousin, Franklin D. Roosevelt, was thrust into national politics on the strength of that now-famous name. He was placed on the 1920 Democratic Party ticket as the running mate of progressive Democrat James Cox.

After President Warren Harding died in office in 1923, he was replaced by his vice president, Calvin Coolidge. Rather than pick someone from the more progressive wing of the Republican Party, in an attempt at ideological balance, conservative Harding (from Ohio) had chosen conservative Coolidge (from Massachusetts). The two won the most massive popular-vote political-party landslide in American history, and Republicans won contests all over the country, even in places they had never won before. This demonstrates the value of choosing a running mate who shares the ideals of fidelity to the Constitution and limited government.

Although he lost the 1920 election, Franklin Roosevelt won the governorship of New York state in 1928, propelling him into the White House in 1932 when the Great Depression destroyed the political fortunes of the Republican Party. Such were the consequences of putting Theodore Roosevelt on the Republican ticket in 1900 — not only did it give us Theodore, it also gave us Franklin.

Kennedy and Johnson

When FDR ran again in 1944, many leaders in the Democratic Party were aware that Roosevelt's poor health indicated that he would likely not complete a fourth term. This meant that the person who was picked as his running mate would likely be president sometime during that term. There are different theories as to why these Democratic leaders wanted Missouri Senator Harry Truman to replace Henry Wallace as FDR's vice president. Some believe that these leaders feared Wallace was too favorable toward the Soviet Union, while others contend that they believed Truman would be easier to control. Whatever the reason for the choice of Truman, Roosevelt's death on April 12, 1945 is more evidence that the choice of a president's running mate can have significant consequences.

Republican Dwight Eisenhower's running mate, and eventual vice president, Richard Nixon, did lose the election of 1960 to Democrat John F. Kennedy, but had Eisenhower not chosen Nixon as his running mate in 1952, Nixon would have never become president, winning the elections of 1968 and 1972.

And, of course, it was in the election of 1960 that Senator John F. Kennedy of Massachusetts opted to create what was dubbed "the Boston-Austin Axis," by asking his major opponent for the Democratic nomination, Senator Lyndon Johnson of Texas, to join the ticket. As a rich man from Boston, Kennedy realized his weakness in the South, particularly in Texas. There is little doubt that Catholic Kennedy saw a southern Protestant as helpful, as well. At that time, no Democrat had ever won the presidency without carrying Texas (at least before Texas' entrance into the Union, and not counting the 1864 election when Texas was part of the Confederacy). With Johnson on the ticket, Kennedy won, but just barely. In fact, some contend that there was enough fraud in the election that it is possible Nixon really won. By 1963, Kennedy was in danger of losing Texas in 1964. That is why Kennedy took that fateful trip to Dallas in November 1963 — to shore up his chances of carrying the Lone Star State again.

Reagan's Disastrous Selection of George H.W. Bush

Ronald Reagan's decision to pick George H.W. Bush for his running mate in 1980 was considered at the time a masterstroke by the political pundits because it "united the Republican Party" and contributed to

Wikimedia Commons/Public domain

Improper balance: Many felt John F. Kennedy's choice of Lyndon Johnson as his running mate provided a "religious" balance, as the Catholic Kennedy needed a "Southern Protestant" on the ticket with him. On November 22, 1963, an assassin's bullet made Johnson president, illustrating the importance of the selection of the vice-presidential candidate.

Reagan's 44-state landslide victory over incumbent President Jimmy Carter. Bush had been Reagan's most difficult opponent in the Republican primaries, and had even criticized Reagan's support for supply-side tax cuts as "voodoo economics."

How much Bush actually helped Reagan electorally in the 1980 general election is debatable, but one can say with some assurance that had Reagan not picked him, Bush would have never been president of the United States. Bush's election in 1988 is largely credited to the voters believing it was "Reagan's third term."

Bush was an establishment Republican, supported by globalists such as David Rockefeller, and he launched the war against Iraq in 1991, calling for a "New World Order" to come out of that conflict. In a speech commemorating the 50th anniversary of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, Bush chose to blame not the Japanese for the attack, but instead the "isolationists" in the United States, such as the America First Committee, who had opposed American entry into the war in Europe.

Wikimedia Commons/Public Domain

Consequences: While Ronald Reagan's selection of George H.W. Bush as his running mate in 1980 helped unite the Republican Party, the consequences of that choice have been enormous. Bush himself was elected in 1988, and this led indirectly to the election of George W. Bush in 2000, giving us 12 years of the Bush brand of Republicanism.

Before running for president in 1980, Bush ran the Central Intelligence Agency, and only left that post when President Jimmy Carter replaced him in 1977. He was the very essence of a "Republican in Name Only."

When running for president in 1988, Bush called for a "kinder, gentler America," which President Reagan's wife, Nancy, understandably took as a coded attack upon her husband's presidency. This conformed with what Democrats had been saying about Reagan during his entire presidency. Bush's administration was filled with Republicans who had opposed Reagan, such as Dick Cheney.

In short, Bush was no conservative. His lackluster presidency led to the election of Bill Clinton in 1992. A different Republican president, not picked from the Rockefeller wing of the party, would have likely defeated Clinton in 1992.

After eight years of Clinton followed the presidency of George W. Bush. After all of the foreign interventions of the Clinton years, Bush — the governor of Texas — called for a "more humble foreign policy," saying that the United States had no business being the world's policeman.

It was all rhetoric, of course, as Bush the Younger simply continued the globalist policies of Bush the Elder. After eight years of the younger Bush, disgusted voters picked a Democrat, Barack Obama — and his running mate, Joe Biden.

In other words, the choice that Reagan made in 1980 has contributed greatly to our present problems, 44 years later.

What's at Stake

All of this should be understood as Donald Trump considers his 2024 running mate.

Many believe that a female running mate would help Trump attract suburban women. While Nikki Haley might come to mind in this regard, her positions on important issues, particularly foreign policy, are so at odds with Trump's that this would be a risky proposition. After all, one must realize that there is no guarantee that Trump — or any other president — will even finish a term, if American history is any indication. Other women, such as Arkansas Governor Sarah Huckabee Sanders, are probably on the list, as is South Dakota Governor Kristi Noem.

Some have suggested Senator Tim Scott of South Carolina, who might help Trump increase his percentage of the vote in the black community. But exactly how much Scott can help Trump in the black community is uncertain.

Senator Ron Johnson of Wisconsin is a solid conservative from a swing state, but Republicans need to hold on to every Senate seat they have. Johnson will have a tough battle getting reelected, but his chances of winning are probably better than another Republican winning an open seat. Other senators who might excite conservatives, such as Ted Cruz of Texas, Rand Paul of Kentucky, or Mike Lee of Utah, would, if picked, create a special election for their seats in the closely divided Senate.

Ominously, the wrong Trump pick this time could have more immediate negative consequences. Reagan had been president less than three months when John Hinckley's assassination attempt almost made Bush president in 1981 rather than 1989.

It would be a terrible thing if the American people elected Trump in November only to have an assassin make the wrong running mate president instead. With the intense hatred for Trump, stirred up by the globalists and their allies in the media, that is something that, sadly, must be considered when his running mate is chosen. ■

Feds Promote Red Flag Laws

The U.S. Department of Justice announced on March 23 that it established what it calls a "National Extreme Risk Protection Order (ERPO) Resource Center," which it claims will "provide training and technical assistance to law enforcement officials, prosecutors, attorneys, judges, clinicians, victim service and social service providers, community organizations, and behavioral health professionals responsible for implementing laws designed to keep guns out of the hands of people who pose a threat to themselves or others."

To paraphrase Newton's third law, every political action can cause an equal and opposite reaction. Fox8.com reported on April 11 that 19 state attorneys general (AGs) sent a letter to U.S. Attorney General Merrick Garland criticizing the ERPO Resource Center as a threat to the Second Amendment.

The letter pulled no punches when it took the Biden administration to task for using "a program that pushes for the more aggressive use of so-called 'red flag' gun laws." The AGs claimed that the ERPO center will hide "under your Department's umbrella" while it "aids officials in stripping Second Amendment rights using anti-gun laws in certain localities that allow for the seizure of firearms via civil proceedings."

The AGs then proceeded to systematically dismantle the notion that ERPOs, also known as red flag laws, accomplish their purported goals. The letter cited multiple studies finding no link between the enactment of red flag laws and any corresponding decrease in violent crime, explaining that such laws might actually increase the chance of deadly violence by "forcing confrontations between law-abiding citizens and law enforcement officers." The AGs then bemoaned the potential of ERPOs to "empower governmental authorities to suspend fundamental rights under the Second Amendment with no genuine due process — while also stigmatizing persons with mental health issues along the way."

The letter even mentioned how red flag orders "can be issued against persons who show no genuine threat, can be imposed for extended periods of time, and can be sought for reasons as minimal as 'overblown political rhetoric on social media.'" The AGs also astutely pointed out that multiple constitutional liberties are endangered by ERPOs. The letter persuasively explained that "it's not just the Second Amendment that's at risk. How can officers enter a home and seize a gun without a warrant in a way that's consistent with the Fourth Amendment? How can ex parte proceedings unconnected to any criminal wrongdoing or criminal investigation be good enough under the Fifth and Fourteenth Amendments when they lead to firearms seizures? Both questions have the same answer: They can't."

One of the most damning accusations in the letter is that the DOJ has partnered with partisan organizations to push an anti-Second Amendment agenda. The AGs proclaimed, "your Department has partnered up with anti-gun ideologues who perceive essential Second Amendment protections to be inconsistent with American values. In short, your new Resource Center is flawed in multiple, basic ways. We urge you to put an immediate stop to this program."

This battle is just warming up. There's no telling where things will go from here, but it's heartening for supporters of the Second Amendment to see so many high-ranking officials rising up to resist this alarming threat.

Heroic Act of Self-preservation

A story out of Boise, Idaho, shows that people can engage in armed self-defense at any age. Idahonews.com reported on April 12 about an 85-year-old Idaho woman bravely fighting back against a violent home break-in.

Christine Jenneiahn was home at night on March 13, with her disabled son sleeping downstairs, when she was awakened in the middle of the night by a masked intruder pointing a 9mm handgun and flashlight in her face. The burglar, later identified as Derek Condon, then handcuffed her to a chair and pistol-whipped her while demanding she tell him where he could find valuables in her house. He threatened to kill her, then ran off to search where she told him she kept valuables in her basement.

Jenneiahn dragged the chair with her into another room, where she retrieved a .357 Magnum revolver. She then hurried back to her bedroom, where Condon would be expecting her once he returned from the basement. She concealed the gun between sofa cushions so Condon wouldn't see it once he entered the bedroom.

When Condon returned, Jenneiahn pulled the .357 out from the couch cushions and shot the burglar twice in his chest. The mortally wounded Condon shot back, hitting Jenneiahn multiple times, but he collapsed on the scene and died from his gunshot wounds. Jenneiahn was seriously wounded and lay on the floor for almost 10 hours before her disabled son came upstairs and gave her a phone, which she used to call 911.

The Bingham County prosecutor's office investigated the case and issued a press release stating that Jenneiahn was justified in her actions, praising her as a hero. Bingham County Prosecuting Attorney Ryan Jolley explained in his publicly released statement: "This case presents an easy analysis of self-defense and justifiable homicide. It also presents one of the most heroic acts of self-preservation I have heard of.... Any reasonable person would believe it necessary to defend themselves or their disabled child under such circumstances. That Christine survived this encounter is truly incredible. Her grit, determination, and will to live appear to be what saved her that night. Absent a clear attempt by [Condon] to retreat from the residence or surrender, which based on the evidence clearly did not occur, Christine was justified in taking any and all means necessary to defend herself and her son that night.... I find that Christine acted in justifiable self-defense and that [Condon's] death was justifiable homicide pursuant to Idaho law." ■

— Patrick Krey

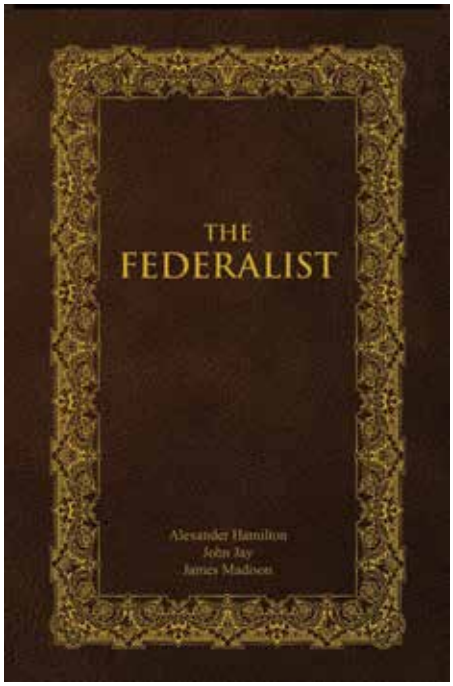
THE REVIEW

The Federalist and a Classic Interpretation Reprinted

by Steve Byas

***The Federalist*,** by Alexander Hamilton, John Jay, and James Madison, Appleton, Wisconsin: Western Islands, 2023, 454 pages, hardcover and paperback.
***How to Read the Federalist*,** by Holmes Alexander, Appleton, Wisconsin: Western Islands, 2023, 72 pages, hardcover and paperback. (To order, see ad on page 1.)

Western Islands, the publishing arm of the John Birch Society (the parent company of *The New American*), has reprinted two books that every Americanist should have on his bookshelf. The first is the collection of newspaper articles written by Alexander Hamilton, John Jay, and James Madison known collectively as *The Federalist Papers*, or simply *The Federalist*. These essays were written anonymously (at the time) by three of the strongest advocates for the U.S. Constitution in order to inspire the average New Yorker to support its ratification in that key state.



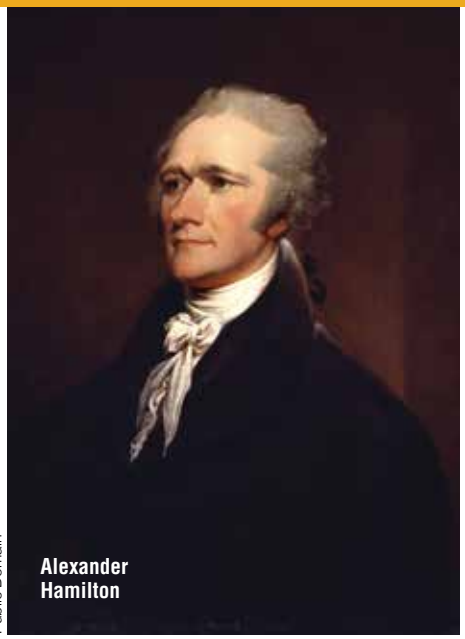
While only nine of the 13 states were needed for ratification, it is unlikely that the newly formed government could have been successful without ratification by Massachusetts, Virginia, and New York. As such, Hamilton enlisted the collaboration of fellow New Yorker John Jay and Virginian James Madison (who has been dubbed "the Father of the Constitution" because of his immense contributions to the document). The three men wrote their essays under the assumed name "Publius" so as to keep the focus on their expositions of the Constitution's meaning, to improve its chances of ratification.

This reprint has the added bonus of including George Washington's 1796 "Farewell Address" and Thomas Jefferson's "Kentucky Resolutions" of 1798, both of which need to be read by every American patriot who values the continued success of our form of government.

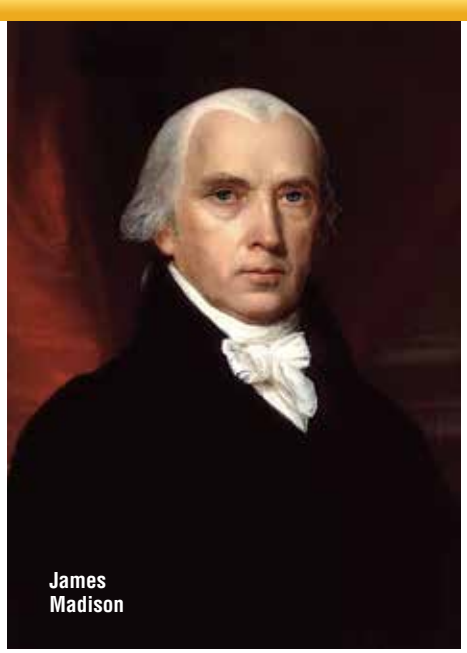
It is not realistic to review all 85 essays included in *The Federalist*, but a summary of nine of these timeless articles should make it very clear that the Framers were certainly establishing not "a democracy," but rather a constitutional republic, in which liberty and law trump majority rule.

The Federalist

In *Federalist* 15, Hamilton argued that the Articles of Confederation, America's first constitution, in effect since 1781, had proven "insufficient," asserting that "there are material imperfections in our national system, and that something is necessary to be done to rescue us from impending anarchy." He noted American military posts on the frontier that were in the posses-


Public Domain
Alexander Hamilton

John Jay


James Madison

sion of the British — forts the British had pledged to abandon at the end of the War for Independence — and also lamented that Spain excluded Americans from "a free participation in the navigation of the Mississippi."

In *Federalist* 24, Hamilton addressed the concern that the building of an army strong enough to drive the British from the Old Northwest and to compel the Spanish to allow the American navigation of the Mississippi River (then the western boundary of the Republic) might lead to a national standing army that could then threaten the rights of the states. To this objection, Hamilton explained that "the whole power of raising armies was lodged in the *legislature*, not in the *executive*." Additionally, he cited a constitutional restriction on the appropriation of money for support of an army for a period longer than two years, noting that the Articles of Confederation had no such injunction.

In *Federalist* 29, Hamilton added another example of restraint upon the military power of the national government — the militias found in the several states. He insisted that any national army could "never be formidable to the liberties of the people while there is a large body of citizens, little if at all inferior to them in discipline and the use of arms, who stand ready to defend their own rights and those of their fellow citizens."

While it might be argued that the military power of the federal government in today's world exceeds the combined might of the states, it is quite clear that the Constitution Hamilton, Jay, and Madison were supporting did not provide for this imbalance.

James Madison made the case in *Federalist* 41 that the Constitution did not make the states inferior to the general government. He noted that the "sum" of power delegated to the federal government was limited by the Constitution, and "the particular structure of the government" restricted it by distributing that power "among its several branches." This is what we call the principle of *separation of powers*.

In *Federalist* 43, Madison explained why the convention defined *treason* in the Constitution, the only crime actually defined in the document. He wrote that "artificial" treasons have been used in history to punish competing factions — factions that Madison declared to be the "natural offspring of free government."

He offered assurances in *Federalist* 45 that the states would remain the most important players in the federal system created by the Constitution, because "without the intervention of the state legislatures, the president of the United States cannot be elected at all." This was, first, because the state legislatures had the sole power to name the electors who would, in turn, choose the president. Secondly, Madison insisted, "the Senate will be elected absolutely and exclusively by the state legislatures."

Of course, both of these provisions have since been eliminated, or nearly so. Today, the state legislatures enact the laws governing the selection of the presidential electors, but they no longer choose the electors, and the 17th Amendment to the Constitution stripped the state legislatures of the power to choose U.S. senators. It is clear that these two changes upset the balance of power that Madison and his fellow Framers had placed into the Constitution.

Finally, Madison wrote, "The powers delegated by the proposed Constitution to the federal government are few and defined. Those which are to remain in the state governments are numerous and indefinite." Again, this has not turned out as Madison envisioned, but it was clearly his intent that most decisions affecting individuals would be made at the state and local level, not at the seat of the federal government.

In *Federalist* 62, Madison discussed the provision of the Constitution in which every state, regardless of population, would have an equal representation in the Senate, with two members each: "The equal vote allowed to each state is at once a constitutional recognition of the portion of sovereignty remaining in the individual states and an instrument for preserving that residuary sovereignty." He added, "No law or resolution can now be passed without the concurrence first of a majority of the people, and then of a majority of the states."

This is an illustration of Madison's flexibility when he saw the benefit of an

idea, as he was originally in favor of a two-house legislative body, but with the larger states (such as his own Virginia) having more representatives in both houses because of a larger population. He had strongly argued at the convention that it would be wrong for a larger state's population to have to pay more of the government's bills, without having a corresponding larger say in questions of taxation.

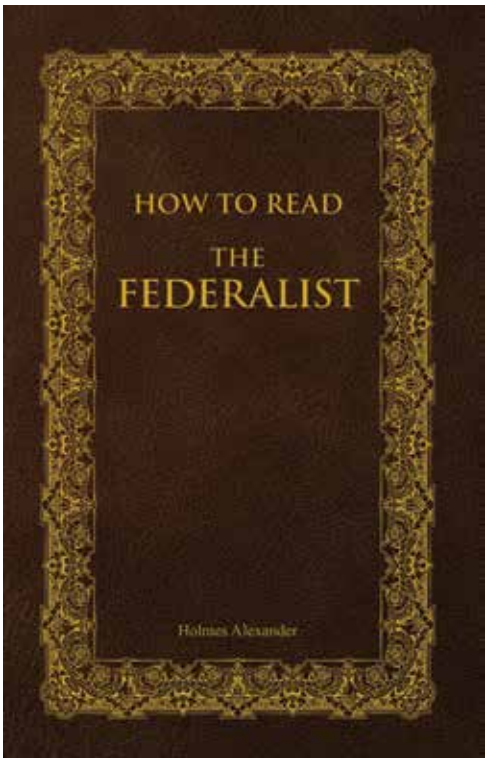
In *Federalist* 68, Hamilton defended the choosing of the president of the United States via electors chosen for that purpose by each state. "The mode of the appointment of the chief magistrate of the United States is almost the only part of the system of any consequence which has escaped without severe censure." He praised the provision that these electors are "chosen in each state," and are to "assemble and vote in the state in which they are chosen." This "detached and divided situation will expose them much less to heats and ferments which might be communicated from them to the people than if they were all to be convened at one time, in one place."

Finally, in another example of the separation of powers written into the Constitution, Hamilton discussed in *Federalist* 75 the making of formal agreements — treaties — with foreign governments. While the president negotiates the terms of any treaty, his work must be ratified by a two-thirds vote of the Senate — the representatives of the states.

How to Read the Federalist

Unfortunately, the wise words of the authors of *The Federalist* are seldom read today. But a man who did read the words and attempted to summarize these principles in a much smaller form was Holmes Alexander, who wrote *How to Read the Federalist* in the 1950s.

In 12 insightful essays, Alexander offers a summary, with applications for our day, of the writings of Hamilton, Jay, and Madison. He condemns those who are not "passionately in love with their country" and have instead turned to a "devotion for One World." He states that much of America's decline began with the unfortunate decision to become directly involved in the First World War, which was itself "a perversion and dilution of patriotism."



"Today we are subject to treaty laws we never passed, to wars of other people's making, to taxes in support of alien and often hostile governments," Alexander writes. (So much so, I might add, that today, the debate is not usually over whether the American taxpayers should support other countries, but rather the amount that we should give to them.)

This desire to involve ourselves in the affairs and wars of other countries is contrary to the sentiments expressed by Madison in *Federalist* 45, in which he said the powers "reserved to the several states will extend to all the objects which, in the ordinary course of affairs, concern the lives, liberties, and properties of the people, and the internal order, improvement, and prosperity of the state." Alexander quotes Madison in *Federalist* 14, when he assured his New York readers that the general government's "jurisdiction is limited to certain enumerated objects."

Alexander examines the phrase "pursuit of happiness" from the Declaration of Independence. By this, he argues, the Founders meant the pursuit of *money*, and he cites Madison to prove it. In *Federalist* 44, Madison wrote, "Laws impairing the obligation of contracts are contrary to the first principles of the social compact."

The pursuit of happiness involves "the right to choose a profession, a career, or a business," Alexander adds, "and to make the most of it within the limits of decency."

Unfortunately, Alexander continues, it has been "planted in our minds" that "private wealth is spawned in wickedness." Today, private property is often confiscated, American wealth and military strength are transferred to nations abroad, and politicians destroy the American character by "political inducement of self-pity."

A central part of the problem is that our "world statesmen" have a "habit of rising above their oaths of office to serve, or to save, some charming little nation or noble old empire which is not, however, their lawful charge," Alexander writes.

He also calls out those who would sacrifice American sovereignty on the altar of "free trade," explaining that "Tariff walls, like the armed forces, are part of the American defense system," and that there is a need for tariff protection "against cheap foreign labor."

What is behind this idolizing of "free trade?" Alexander asserts, "Free trade is a doctrine for the economic uplift of have-not nations.… It is an international share-the-wealth proposition."

In fact, he argues, "It's doubtful if all the traitors from Benedict Arnold through the Rosenbergs did more to destroy the country than those oath-breakers who have subverted the equal rights of men to gain and retain what their talents deserve."

Quoting Hamilton in *Federalist* 12, Alexander argues that tariffs — taxes on foreign goods — should still be our main source of federal revenue. "Hamilton had in mind," Alexander writes, "that overseas merchants would be quite willing to pay a sort of admission tax in order to enter the American market." He further argues, "For state sovereignty, it was necessary that the states have prior access to the home sources of taxation." In other words, the federal government takes so much money from the people in taxation, it starves the state governments into dependency upon the federal government.

A principal reason that Americans have abandoned morally correct, limited government is that our people have left their

For all of their differences, the Founders such as Washington, Hamilton, Madison, and Jefferson agreed on some fundamentals — we need government, but we need government to be limited, and the best way to do that is with a constitution, detailing the powers government will have.

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first love — a nation "under God." Alexander explains that "our sacred documents were written in the light of Christian belief," but this was not because government commanded obedience to a particular religious viewpoint. In *Federalist* 1, Hamilton wrote, "For in politics, as in religion, it is equally absurd to aim at making proselytes by fire and sword. Heresies in either can rarely be cured by persecution."

In words that are even more applicable to our day, Alexander writes, "Also, there's a good deal of evidence that the tear-down of religion was part of a larger conspiracy. We had the era of debunkery in which our heroes were systematically smeared as slave-breeders, non-believers, money-chasers and frauds. The destruction of veneration for American traditions seems far too calculated to be accidental."

Perhaps a major reason for these attacks upon our Founding Fathers is to distract us from their superior understanding of human nature and the recognition of this fact in our Constitution. Jefferson said that we should not place our trust in human beings, but rather should bind them down with the chains of that Constitution. Alexander says that "one of the main ingredients of freedom is distrust. One of the essentials of self-government is suspicion. This is what Jefferson meant by writing: Free government is founded in jealousy."

As Madison wrote in *Federalist* 51, "If men were angels, no government would be necessary. If angels were to govern men, neither external nor internal controls on government would be necessary."

While men will naturally resist giving power to a person who openly admits he wants office so he can exercise control over his fellow human beings, they far too often succumb to appeals that we must give up power in an "emergency." Alexander laments, "Emergency-only legislation became emergency-always."

Hamilton warned in *Federalist* 8: "Safety from external danger is the most powerful director of national conduct.… To be more safe, [nations] at length become willing to run the risk of being less free." This, Alexander argues, often translates into fear of economic insecurity, and the surrendering of liberties to the government in order to remove that fear.

Alexander ends his work with a quote from Hamilton in response to those who would argue that the Constitution is not perfect. In *Federalist* 85, Hamilton wrote, "I never expect to see a perfect work from imperfect man.… The compacts which are to embrace thirteen distinct states in a common bond of amity and union must as necessarily be a compromise of as many dissimilar interests."

For all of their differences, the Founders such as Washington, Hamilton, Madison, and Jefferson agreed on some fundamentals — we need government, but we need government to be limited, and the best way to do that is with a constitution, detailing the powers government will have.

Three of the Founders explained all of this in *The Federalist*, and Holmes Alexander offers us an excellent interpretation and application of that historic classic in his own classic, *How to Read the Federalist*. A fine addition to this reprinted edition of the Alexander classic is the foreword, penned by Dennis Behreandt, publisher of *The New American*. Behreandt explores some of the more recent events that have occurred in America, "matters [that] have progressed to a level of severity that could not have been imagined by Alexander and his contemporaries," which Behreandt describes as "a toxic and noxious combination of stupidity and depravity."

Miners, Bureaucrats Scrap Over Critical Minerals

by William P. Hoar

***The War Below: Lithium, Copper, and the Global Battle to Power Our Lives*,** by Ernest Scheyder, New York: One Signal Publishers/Atria, 2024, 384 pages, hardcover.

It is fitting, after a fashion, that this account detailing the struggles of mining and the minerals needed to drive our presumed "green energy transition" gives both the first and last words to a botanist, not a miner. It personifies a complex state of affairs.

The botanist (Jerry Tiehm) and, more specifically, the little plant he found in Nevada's Rhyolite Ridge — later named Tiehm's buckwheat — became the root of a major political and economic match because the unique spot where the (later officially endangered) plant was found is in an area rich with lithium. That metal is also widely seen as key to an embryonic energy revolution.

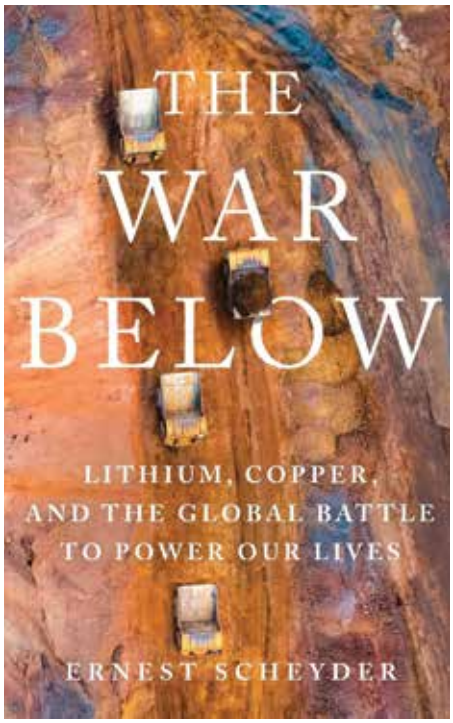
What matters more, asks the author: the plant, or the lithium that is beneath it?

What some rational readers must also wonder: How did mankind make any progress before it had government bureaus to tell them what they should do and not do?

To be clear, the author is not confrontational with compelling personal contentions or counterarguments. He generally lets his selected facts do their job in an old-fashioned journalistic manner, which is suited to his wire-service experience, itself sadly uncommon these days.

We get to shake our heads over which bureaucracy (and/or politician) passes the buck or spends it. If, as the title suggests, the energy war is "below the ground," the decisions and red tape are on our level.

Ernest Scheyder, author of *The War Below: Lithium, Copper, and the Global Battle to Power Our Lives*, is a senior correspondent for Reuters, covering what he usually terms the "green energy transition," as well as the minerals undergirding it. He previously covered the U.S. shale-oil revolution and related issues for that wire service. On one hand, this volume does a good job illuminating the energy struggles. On the other hand, it doesn't challenge some key premises.



Dueling Agencies

The War Below accurately passes along, for example, some of the goals of the Paris climate accords of 2016. But one needs to look elsewhere for a more complete picture. Even if the Biden administration's assumptions about its regulations proved to be accurate, this would only mitigate alleged global warming by 0.023 degrees Celsius by the year 2100 — an undetectable effect. The 80 percent of our energy that we get from fossil fuels and nuclear power — and still depend upon — is not the theme of the book.

The "green" politicians and bureaucrats say the future belongs to electric vehicles (EVs), but going in that direction also requires trade-offs. Those presumptive batteries will need massive amounts of lithium, cobalt, nickel, and copper — which all need to be mined out of the Earth. The author does a masterful job in describing such challenges in *The War Below.*

Yet, even with ambitious edicts of the president of the United States and governor of California, for example, EV sales have stalled. This is taking place despite all the taxpayer dollars that tend to disguise costs. The Texas Public Policy Foundation finds that "nearly $22 billion in federal and state subsidies and regulatory credits suppressed the retail price of EVs" by an average of almost $50,000.

To be fair, that aspect of the story is not the author's beat, but including the fuller side of the story would improve the reader's understanding. Indeed, even as we were reviewing the book, reports (not the most prominent, to be sure) showed that U.S. oil and natural-gas production — largely on state and private lands — is at a record level. And as *The Wall Street Journal* put it recently, even though the White House would never admit it, "privately financed fossil-fuel production is doing far more to boost the U.S. economy than [Biden's] hundreds of billions of dollars of spending on electric vehicles and green energy."

That's not to say that the book under review is without perceptive observations. Far from it. In his exposition about the Tiehm's buckwheat flowers, some of which were killed in Nevada, he points out that the government officially ruled that rodents, not the mining company ioneer, Ltd., were the culprits. He is adept at depicting our government bureaucracy at work. While one "Biden-controlled agency" was

> debating whether to declare Tiehm's buckwheat endangered, another was considering whether to lend hundreds of millions of dollars to the company. In December 2021, ioneer said its application for a loan from a U.S. Department of Energy program that Tesla had famously used a decade prior was moving to the third of four review stages. It was a remarkable development given that another U.S. government agency was also considering a stop that could kill the entire mine. Washington's left hand, it seemed, did not know what its right hand was doing, much as in the case of Lithium Americas' Thacker Pass mine in Nevada and the Resolution copper project in Arizona.

The "green" politicians and bureaucrats say the future belongs to electric vehicles (EVs), but going in that direction also requires trade-offs. Those presumptive batteries will need massive amounts of lithium, cobalt, nickel, and copper — which all need to be mined out of the Earth.

That latter case cited involved, among others, Apache activists with religious objections. The more he reported on that particular situation, says the author, the more he became convinced the issues were "intractable." The various back-and-forth moves of various government entities, in his words, were "enough to give someone whiplash." Inconsistency, he found, "would come to define Biden's EV minerals strategy."

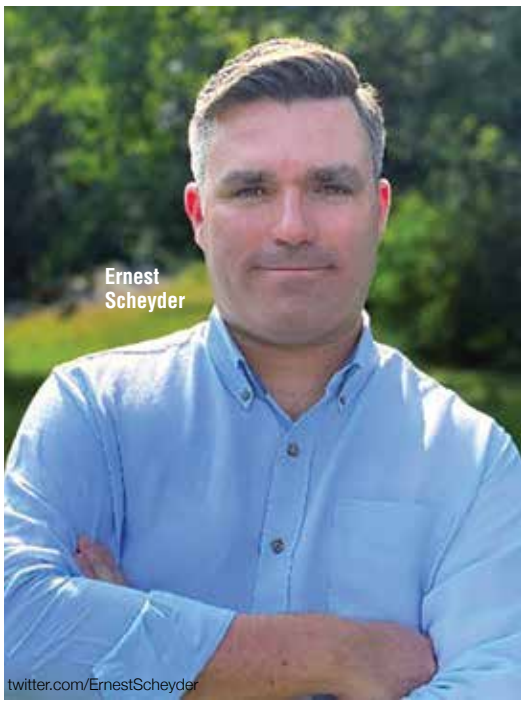
Global Geopolitics

As you might imagine, the book under review has a lot on electric vehicles, but leaves discussion of their practicality or lack thereof largely to others. (According to the National Center for Energy Analytics, citing a study by the U.S. Energy Department, it will cost $25 billion-$125 billion just for the infrastructure upgrades to support EVs at a level of 10 percent of all on-road cars. Currently, they amount to about two percent. Meeting the Environmental Protection Agency's goals, estimates the center, will require the spending of *more than one trillion dollars* for grid upgrades by 2035.)

That is not to say that this volume lacks numbers. Cited, for instance, is some of what is needed to make EV batteries if the globe is to meet the goals set by the 2016 Paris accords. Between 2022 and 2030, the International Energy Agency has estimated, the world would need to "build fifty new lithium mines, sixty new nickel mines, and at least seventeen cobalt mines." (This is footnoted, as is the book throughout. Indeed, many of the footnotes are from the author's earlier writings.)

Physically, the book includes a helpful map ("The Global Battle for Green Energy Minerals"), citing sites mentioned in the book — many in this country, as well as (among others) Brazil, Bolivia, Chile, Argentina, Ghana, Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), China, and Australia. While the pages — with some chapters covering multiple topics/places — could have used some breakout boxes or subtitles, we will give the publisher a tip of the hat for employing simple energy-bolt graphics between discrete sections. Its coverage is wide — giving us looks at technological, environmental, and business matters, as well as politics on the national and international levels. *Fortune* named *The War Below* one of its "Best Books" of the year.

Accounts dig deeply in some places, including Bolivia (the "Tibet of the Americas"), where there is a tussle over extracting lithium from its salt flats (Salar de Uyuni) — the largest in the world (spotted by Neil Armstrong from the moon in 1969). The shortest chapter is one in which the author admits failure in his attempt to source the specific minerals that power his Ryobi leaf blower.


Ernest Scheyder
twitter.com/ErnestScheyder

Some of the intricacies about copper and cobalt mining, in various countries, might leave your head spinning — depending on when and where you concentrate and who was in charge of mining at the time. When one private American company was running matters at a mine in the DRC, its chief executive told Scheyder, it was "great" to go into that region "and give employment, improve health, improve water for villages, build educational facilities." Then overall economics forced that company to hold a "fire sale" of its controlling stake to China Molybdenum. Safety and community relations reportedly paled. Subsequent reports about the "artisanal miners" were horrendous. Politics, internationally and nationally, got involved after Biden's Secretary of State Antony Blinken signed a memorandum of understanding with Zambia and the DRC to help them develop their mines.

Yes, more government involvement, subsidizing problems, seems not to be a panacea. Here, the author is on target, if a bit polite:

> The optics of Washington supporting mines in a region where China had already heavily invested, where an American company had to sell its prized assets, and where some children were active parts of the mining chain, grew to be too much for prominent U.S. politicians, especially those who wanted more mining in the United States. "America needs to develop our vast mineral wealth, right here, with high-wage, union-protected jobs instead of continuing to send American taxpayer dollars to countries like the Congo that use child slave labor. The only winner here is China," said Representative Pete Stauber.

The district represented by Pete Stauber (R) is in northern Minnesota, as the author explains, and it contains some of the largest "deposits of copper, cobalt, and nickel found in the country, specifically the Boundary Waters area near where Twin Metals wants to mine."

AP Images

Enemy mine: California's Mountain Pass mine (shown here) is a valuable source of rare-earth metals. Stifling regulations forced the mine's U.S. operators into bankruptcy, and it's now partially owned by a Chinese mining firm.

Permits for that mine project, as with many mentioned in the book, take years to get through the bureaucracy. Chapters earlier, we saw President Barack Obama's secretary of agriculture postponing the project by ordering an environmental study; Trump canceling the study; Biden, when running for president, saying nothing about it; Biden's subsequent secretary of the interior (Deb Haaland) declining to discuss the project during a congressional hearing, but then later canceling the leases (saying they were "improperly renewed" by Trump); and Stauber, mentioned above, blasting that decision as being based on politics, not science, commenting, "This Administration has decided to leave American, blue-collar workers behind and bow to pressure from radicals who prefer to rely on foreign adversarial nations for these minerals."

That's a synopsis; the author has plenty more. The writing is clear, but what it reveals can be exasperating. We are told by some progressives that it's urgent to fight climate change. To do this, say others, we need electric vehicles to power crucial technologies. Just don't take the necessary building blocks from their backyards. We have to think more before acting, say others.

Doing Business Under Washington's Eye

Such quandaries pop up repeatedly in *The War Below*. The United States, as the author acknowledges, has enough metals under its soil to build millions of its own electric vehicles (which we have been told will save us from fossil-fueled climate-change disaster). The question, he writes, "center[s] around whether the country would tap these reserves."

Often standing in the middle is the Washington silo effect — in the author's words, when "one small sliver of the federal machine" cares only about "its own small sliver, not the whole."

Geopolitically, some other nations are more focused, with Communist China being a prime example. It increasingly sees rare-earth minerals as a powerful economic weapon. *The War Below* has the ins and outs of how (for instance) Beijing has been playing the long game in this matter over a California mine called Mountain Pass, which was valuable to U.S. soldiers in the first Gulf War. But American mine operators kept running into environmental regulations. Again, this is a complicated series of events (told well by the author) over many years, including bankruptcy and buyouts. At this point, a careful reader might discover why the U.S. Bankruptcy Court in Delaware is one of the spots designated on the volume's map about the "global battle for green energy minerals."

As we read, California's Mountain Pass ("a mine that had held so much promise for America's role in the green energy transition") got a new owner — in a legal proceeding that lasted less than 40 minutes. As summarized by Scheyder:

> A consortium led by a Chicago hedge fund and a Chinese mining company now owned the only American source of metals used in nearly every single consumer electronic device — and, more important, in U.S. military weapons — by bidding a comparatively trifling $50,000 more than an American rival.

No doubt there is laughing among the comrades in Beijing, as they take our laws into their own hands.

There are both winners and losers in *The War Below*. One young firm on the rise, headed by engineers Ajay Kochhar (an Indian immigrant) and Tim Johnston, gets a bit of the spotlight. Their recycling company, called Li-Cycle, is due to go fully operational in Rochester, New York, this year; it also has facilities in Alabama, Ontario, and Arizona. When the author visited the company, he and Kochhar took note of what that meant: The biggest source of lithium on the North American continent will be not a mine, but old batteries.

At that time, the United States only produced about 5,000 tonnes a year of lithium at a small facility in Nevada. Why so little? Because, Scheyder recounts (recalling facilities previously covered), "Lithium Americas, ioneer, Piedmont and others had not been able to get their permits, much less open new lithium mines." Meanwhile, Li-Cycle is reportedly eyeing expansion into Europe and Asia.

The epilogue updates several of the episodes covered in earlier chapters. You can hear the same tune in many of them — as the U.S. Energy Department lends money to ioneer for its Nevada mine less than two weeks after the Interior Department said "no mining would be allowed on 225,504 acres in northern Minnesota for the next two decades, a region that include[s] the proposed Twin Metals copper, cobalt, and nickel project," for instance. Biden administration officials, you will not be surprised to hear, "said they did not think it incongruous that they were blocking" the latter project at the same time they were "heralding the green energy transition."

The proper word might not be "incongruous." Try "ruinous." ■

TAKING ACTION

Overcoming the War on Children

by William S. Hahn,
CEO of The John Birch Society

kieferpix/iStock/Getty Images Plus

In a conversation with my pastor over pizza and soda while bowling with our Sunday School class, he summed up his morning sermon about Jesus' instruction of letting the little children come to Him by highlighting what happens to those who instead cause children to "stumble." As Luke 17:2 reads, "It would be better for them to be thrown into the sea with a millstone tied around their neck than to cause one of these little ones to stumble."

The war on children is part of the overall spiritual war between good and evil. Satan tries to pervert everything God created in order to turn people away from Him and toward sin. This includes causing children to stumble.

Keep in mind that for revolutionaries, the issue is never the issue. Revolution is always the issue. The revolutionaries demand that society be burned down and God be replaced with the almighty state, and one way to accomplish this is by destroying the family. The war on the traditional family includes an attack on children. Since most children have an innate trust in adults, they can be easily manipulated, and what easier way to turn children against their parents than by filling their heads full of falsehoods at the public schools?

On top of this, many four-year university students receive much more than a degree. They are indoctrinated into a liberal worldview holding that freedom is an outdated concept, the environment is more important than humans, and more government is always better.

What to do?

A number of things are recommended elsewhere in this issue. Here, I'd like to emphasize that the raising and education of children is the responsibility of parents, not the government — especially not the federal government, since that power has not been delegated to it in the Constitution.

Parents must build a strong foundation for lifelong learning in their children, making a commitment to giving their children the best education they can. This includes teaching them the four levels of government ordained by God — self, family, church, and civil — and our responsibility to each. For some, homeschooling is a great option, but the war on the traditional family has made this difficult for many people. Private school might be an option for some families, especially if their church offers it.

In any case, curriculum must be carefully examined for Common Core, social-emotional learning, critical race theory, or any other perverted nonsense served up by the federal government. Schools that accept government money — even private schools — are usually obligated to offer this type of "approved" curriculum.

The war on the family, and particularly children, is one reason The John Birch Society started American Opinion Foundation nearly 20 years ago. This foundation hosts FreedomProject Academy (FPA), an online K-12 school that does not accept government funding. Now in its 14th year, FPA offers a classical, Judeo-Christian education steeped in the tradition of the Founding Fathers and focusing on "the three R's," as well as science, logic, and foreign-language study. In addition to offering traditional homeschool courses, FPA also offers two additional tracks: Anytime Academy and Live Courses. Anytime Academy offers recorded online courses that students can complete at their own pace, while Live Courses require regular attendance and are conducted at a more rigorous pace.

Since most public-school students transferring to FPA are anywhere from two to four years behind where they should be for their age, FPA offers tutoring and additional options to help students catch up. Plus, FPA partners with churches to set up classrooms. Whether parents are looking for a single class or an entire curriculum, FPA can help. Watch this partnership in action with a profile of Grace Christian Academy in Green Bay, Wisconsin, by scanning the QR code above.

Enrollment is now open for the 2024-2025 academic year. Give your children a rock-solid educational foundation that they will use for life. These future patriot-leaders will be equipped to overcome the war on children. Visit FPEUSA.org for more information. ■

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